‘Little ones’ flip switch of giant Christmas tree. » PAGE 2

‘The Snow Queen’ warms a sold-out crowd. » PAGE 13

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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Inos-Torres certified winner

» Official counting shows Inos-Torres lead with a 1,744 margin

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Election Commission board certified Friday night the election results of the Nov. 21 gubernatorial runoff, declaring Republican standard-bearer Gov. Eloy S. Inos and Ralph DLG Torres the winner over independent Heinz S. Hofschneider-Ray N. Yumul with a big 1,744 margin.

The CEC board, chaired by Frances M. Sablan, unanimously approved the election results shortly after the counting of absentee ballots at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-purpose Center in Susupe.

The Inos-Torres tandem, which already enjoyed a commanding 1,599-lead, garnered 330 more

See INOS-TORRES on Page 4

RECYCLED WONDERS JAYSON CAMACHO

Tourists and residents check out the entries submitted by different schools on Saipan for the Christmas Tree Decorating Contest, which has become one of the mainstays of the annual Christmas in the Marianas celebration. The trees are decorated with recycled materials. The winners will be announced at a later date.

See story and more photos on Pages 6 and 14

Runoff turnout at only 66.77 percent

» CEC chair disappointed with low turnout, rejection of many absentee ballots

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Commonwealth Election Commission board chair Frances M. Sablan has expressed disappointment with the rejection of many absentee ballots as well as the low turnout in the gubernatorial runoff race.

According to official CEC Nov. 21 runoff election results, 12,010 people voted out of 17,986 registered voters, translating to a 66.77-percent voter turnout.

See RUNOFF on Page 4

Inos: We need to review runoff process

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

» Attao wants CEC to work with Legislature for ‘more effective model’

With only 794 of an estimated 2,100 absentee ballots making it to the U.S. Post Office in time for the Dec. 5 deadline, Gov. Eloy S. Inos and the camp of former House speaker Heinz S. Hofschneider are calling for reforms on the whole runoff election process, especially the one that deals with absentee ballots.

Inos and his running mate, Senate President Ralph DLG. Torres (R-Saipan) won the 2014 runoff election for governor after the absentee votes that did come in Friday pushed their lead to 1,744.

See REVIEW on Page 4

Woman gets 17.5 years in prison for sex trafficking of children

The federal court on Friday slapped a 17.5-year prison term against Annette Nakatsukasa Basa for sex trafficking of children.

At a daylong sentencing, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona ordered the 36-year-old Basa to be placed on five years of supervised release after she completes her prison term.

Basa was given credit for time served. During her probation, she will be required to pay $9,102.39 in restitution, $100 special assessment fee, and perform 500 hours of community service.

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LOCAL
About 338 care packages are prepared for CNMI service members this year.
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Typhoon Hagupit weakens, sparing the Philippines from wider devastation.
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LIFE & STYLE
Beyonce, Pharrell Williams and Sam Smith lead in Grammy nominations.
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GOT A NEWS TIP?
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Local

‘Little ones’ flip switch of giant Christmas tree

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

MARK RABAGO
Members of the public take in the sights after the official lighting ceremony for the giant Christmas tree at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe on Friday.

Gov. Eloy S. Inos passed on this year’s responsibility of switching on the giant Christmas tree at the center of the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center to the younger generation, letting his grandchildren and other kids flip the power switch at dusk on Friday.

“I feel I was here doing this thing two months ago. Time runs so fast. But I’m happy to be here again this year and I want thank you all for coming down to join us, join the community to do our annual Christmas tree lighting here at the Multi-Purpose Center… I requested that the little ones would participate in the flipping of the switch to light up our annual Christmas tree lighting event,” he said.

Some of the children told *Saipan Tribune* it was an honor for them to turn on the lights of the Christmas tree that illuminated the entire area and could be clearly seen from Beach Road.

Inos, who later that evening would be certified as the winner of the 2014 runoff election for governor with his running mate, Senate President Ralph DLG. Torres (R-Saipan), said the lighting of the giant Christmas tree signals the start of the holiday season in the Commonwealth.

“This is the season for friendship, a season to give, a season to forgive. If you still have those butterflies in your stomach, take some Pepto Bismol and everything will be OK. Yes, it’s a season to rejoice and a season for everyone to give thanks to the good Lord for the many good things that He has given us during the past year and we pray that the good Lord will guide us in the coming year 2015. Bless us with prosperity, bless is with good tidings, and bless us as a community. Let us help one another make Saipan and the Commonwealth a very, very wonderful place to live,” said the governor.

Inos also extended his gratitude to everyone who made the event possible, especially to those who set up the giant Christmas tree and the island band that serenaded everyone in attendance with classic yuletide tunes.

“I also want to thank the folks who made this all possible. The staff of the Governor’s Office, the DPW folks, I know there were also some folks from Corrections that also helped. Especially, I want to thank our choir in blue. Thank you! It’s always nice entertainment. I know you do this every year and I hope you don’t retire,” he said.

The island band was made up of personnel from the Department of Public Safety and the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

Aside from Inos and Torres, other officials who attended the Christmas tree lighting last Friday were House floor leader Rep. Ralph Demapan (R-Saipan), Senate vice president Victor Hocog (Ind-Rota), Marianas Visitors Authority managing director Perry Tenorio, and press secretary Angel Demapan. L.J. Castro served as emcee.

Man, 63, gets 46 mos. for selling ‘ice’ near NMC

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona on Thursday slapped a 46-month prison term on Le Xiang Chen, 63, for selling methamphetamine or “ice” near the Northern Marianas College.

After completing his prison term, Chen will be placed on six years of supervised release. He was given credit for time served.

During his supervised release, Chen will be turned over to immigration official for removal proceedings.

Chen will also be required to perform 100 hours of community service, pay a $100 court assessment fee, and forfeit $750 representing the sum of money equal to the proceeds derived from the offense.

Assistant U.S. attorney Ross Naughton recommended a 37-month prison term. Court-appointed counsel Bruce Berline recommended a 12-month imprisonment with credit for time served.

Chen was one of seven persons arrested in February by local and federal law enforcements for alleged distribution of “ice.”

In May, Chen pleaded guilty to distribution of “ice” near a school.

According to the plea agreement, on Nov. 8, 2012, Chen sold 2.8 grams of “ice” to a confidential source for the Drug Enforcement Administration in exchange for $750. The sale took place in Chen’s residence in Finasisu, which is within 1,000 feet of NMC. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

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CRM certifies CUC exploratory geothermal drilling

By JAYSON CAMACHO
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REPORTER

The Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality's Division of Coastal Resource Management board approved Thursday to certify the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s exploratory geothermal well drilling project.

This will now allow CUC contractors Maevelle Energy, 4i CNMI LLC, and Alexander Drilling to go ahead with the drilling of a well in Gualo Rai to explore a possible source of geothermal energy.

CUC representative Maximino Simian, who is a registered geologist, as well as 4i's representative and private consultant Tim Lang, spoke at Thursday's meeting on behalf of CUC to move the project forward.

The project site is located in Gualo Rai at the site of CUC's existing well called GR6. The well is about 400 feet deep and is currently not being used for production, according to Lang.

He explained that during drilling they encountered "abnormally high water temperatures."

"As a result of further study, it was concluded that there was the potential to exploit subsurface waters for geothermal energy," he said.

Lang said that at this point no one can say for certain that the well could generate geothermal energy but that is the purpose of the exploratory well.

"The plan is to utilize the existing well and, through standard core drilling method, continue drilling down through to the bottom of the limestone layer. At that point the well will be cased and grouted up to prevent leaks of any water below the limestone layer into the limestone layer, and potentially into the aquifer," Lang said.

The aquifer is a body of permeable rock that can contain or pass on water.

After the drilling, the contractor will bring in a core drilling rig and continue drilling down into the volcanic layer until they reach a water with a temperature of 200 degrees or a maximum depth of 2,000 feet.

DCRM board member George Camacho, who is also CUC's power division manager, asked Lang if the project would involve any major earth moving activity and if there are any gases and efforts to control that.

Lang told Camacho that there won't be any earth moving and they haven't identified any gases yet but there could be a potential for gases during the drilling. He said they will use a blowout preventer, which is used to control and monitor oil and gas.

Simian said they will be monitoring specifically for poisonous gases such as hydrogen sulfide that comes from oil and gas but added that they don't expect to find any.

When asked if residents in the area have already been notified, Lang said John Gourley of Micronesian Environmental Services is still trying to locate one resident whose land is adjacent to where the project site is located.

After the meeting, DCRM board member David Rosario told *Saipan Tribune*, said he knows of only two permits that the project will need to go through: a one-step permit application and a well drilling application, which is required by BECQ.

Camacho said the project is part of CUC's efforts to identify alternative resources for power production and reduce CUC's dependence on diesel.

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BOE, PSS plan for implementation of HLI 18-12

By DENNIS B. CHAN
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REPORTER

The CNMI Board of Education and Public School System are looking at what needs to be done, now that House Legislative Initiative 18-12 was passed in November, raising from 15 percent to 25 percent PSS' share of the local budget.

There is no additional amendment or provision within the initiative that sets an effective date for the measure, according to board chair Herman Guerrero, but because the people "overwhelmingly" voted for the initiative, it should be effective immediately when it was officially certified.

"Our legal counsel is looking at whether the current appropriation measure needs to be amended to comply with the constitutional amendment… Perhaps we need to do a little research, and once the governor is sworn in and the new Legislature is sworn in, we will have conversation with them to see what needs to be done," he told members of the board's committee on finance, personnel, and administration last Friday.

Guerrero

"This is where we are" on the initiative, he told the committee.

The initiative garnered 7,826 "yes" votes and 3,958 "no" votes in last month's polls.

Education Commissioner Dr. Rita Sablan said they are now planning for the "implementation" of the new measure.

"We've begun to do needs assessment for full-time Kindergarten," she said.

Full-time Kindergarten, continuous school improvement and modernization of school facilities, class size reduction, and classroom instructional materials and technology were promoted as part of the initiative.

Sablan said schools are working on providing staffing pattern information on "what they will be anticipating next year."

PSS is also looking at classrooms instructions and materials. "Our plan is to go before the board and adopt a core curriculum instructional material for our K to 12 programs," she said.

Needs assessment has been completed for this, according to Sablan. She also said they have to look at the "modernization" aspect with regards to chemistry, biology, and math laboratories in schools.

The preliminary work is ongoing, she said, and they hope to have "more solid numbers" presented to the full board later this month.

Sablan described building more classrooms for the Garapan, Oleai, San Vicente, Koblerville, and Gregorio T. Camacho elementary schools as "very, very critical" for implementation of full-time Kindergarten.

Approximately 20 to 24 classrooms are needed, according to her. Right now only Kagman Elementary School and Sinapalo Elementary School have the classrooms for full-time Kindergarten, but more full-time equivalents are needed for these schools.

WOMAN

From Page 1

Manglona also ordered Basa to undergo a mental health assessment and complete any treatment while in the federal prison custody.

Basa is prohibited from using controlled drugs or alcohol during her probation. She must also register as a sex offender under the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act program.

Basa pleaded guilty in February to a count charging her with sex trafficking of children.

According to the plea agreement that Basa and her court-appointed counsel Steven Pixley entered with the U.S. government, Basa recruited, enticed, and harbored a 15-year-old girl to engage in commercial sex acts from April 1, 2013, to July 16, 2013.

Using a cell phone, Basa arranged meetings with adult men and the girl, and then drove the girl to meeting sites for the purpose of having her have sex with those men.

Basa gave the girl condoms for those meetings. In exchange, Basa received money or methamphetamine or "ice" from the men.

The indictment charged Basa and former firefighter Richard S. Benavente of engaging in sexual exploitation and sex trafficking of two minors.

An FBI special agent alleged that Benavente took videos of himself having sex with two 15-year-old girls. Basa allegedly offered the girls to Benavente in exchange for "ice" and an unspecified amount of money.

Benavente has already pleaded guilty.

In Basa's sentencing memorandum, Pixley claimed that the defendant was sexually abused by some police officers when she was young. He said this abuse left Basa with a variety of psychological problems.

Pixley retained Dr. Laura L. Post, a psychiatrist, to evaluate Basa. He said a review of the report and other evidence support a finding that Basa has significant reduced mental capacity.

The lawyer said Basa's mother moved to Guam when she was young and she dropped out of school at an early age.

Alicia A.G. Limtiaco, U.S. Attorney for the Districts of Guam and the NMI, stated that the sexual exploitation and abuse of vulnerable individuals is an affront to fundamental human rights and will not be tolerated.

Limtiaco said Basa preyed on these young victims, manipulating and sexually exploiting them.

"The sentence sends the critical message that human trafficking is a crime that violates the very core and dignity of a human being and traffickers face severe punishment," said Limtiaco in a statement.

She pointed out that the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Attorney's Office remain committed to vigorously prosecuting and holding accountable those who perpetrate these heinous crimes.

Limtiaco reminded defendants who have committed sexual abuse of children that under federal and local law, all sex offenders have a duty to register and keep their registration current with the Sex Offender Registry in their jurisdiction.

Sex offenders who travel to the CNMI and who reside in the CNMI are required to inform the CNMI Department of Public Safety Sex Offender Registry where they reside, work, or attend school and that they must also periodically update their registration information.

The sex offender registry was created in order to protect the public by protecting victims, preventing further victimization and informing the public of the whereabouts of sex offenders.

Limtiaco said the prosecution of Basa is part of the U.S. DOJ's Project Safe Childhood Initiative, a nationwide commitment to aggressively prosecute defendants who engage in the sexual victimization of children and adults, possess or receive pornography, and sex offenders who fail to register with the jurisdiction's Sex Offender Registry.

The FBI conducted the investigation in Basa's case. Assistant U.S. attorneys Rami Badawy and Ross Naughton handled the case. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

RUNOFF

From Page 1

The official CEC election results for the Nov. 4 general polls showed that out of 17,986 registered voters, a total of 13,798 voted, indicating a 76.72-percent turnout.

There were 959 absentee votes counted for the runoff, while 2,280 absentee votes were counted for the general elections.

In an interview shortly after the counting of absentee ballots last Friday, CEC chair Sablan disclosed that there were 515 good absentee ballots but 276 others were not counted because they were either not postmarked, they couldn't read the postmarks, or had no affidavits.

Sablan said a third or 34 percent of the rejected ballots were mostly because of lack of postmarks.

"So we need to find out now whether we need to re-educate our voters to make sure that when they bring it to the post office, they just don't drop it. They make sure that it's stamped," she said.

Sablan places that responsibility on the absentee voters because they're the only ones who can do this.

"Take ownership of it and actually do something about it," she urged voters.

Sablan said the bottom line is, if voters really feel it's important, they should prioritize it and then make sure that they make sure it's stamped.

"I'm kind of disappointed with the numbers that were not counted because of that reason," the CEC chair said.

Sablan said she personally got phone calls from friends and relatives that they are really eager and anxious to receive their absentee ballots but they did not receive them on time.

CEC started sorting and examining the absentee ballots as soon as they picked up the ballots from the post office Friday at 4pm.

Sablan said they completed the counting process four hours from the time the ballots came in at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center.

With respect to absentee ballots, CEC executive director Robert A. Guerrero estimated the turnout at only a little over 50 percent.

Guerrero said CEC does everything set by the law and there is nothing they can do for anything that goes beyond what is mailed.

"I don't think that the post office here is at fault," said Guerrero, citing that the problem is national because there's a lot of shipping going on at this time of the year.

He said it just unfortunate that the runoff election happened within this time of the year.

Guerrero said until the Legislature changes the law or a constitutional remedy is done, there is really not much the CEC can do.

Guerrero said CEC has a plan of re-analyzing the election statute and the Constitution and make recommendations to the Legislature.

For the low runoff election turnout, Guerrero said he believes that there are fewer voters because there were only two candidates compared to the many candidates in the general elections.

REVIEW

From Page 1

Inos-Torres got 330 votes in the absentee votes, while Hofschneider-Yumul received 185.

While the governor-elect is ecstatic for winning his first election running for the chief executive post of the Commonwealth, Inos acknowledged that the runoff process this year left something to be desired.

"From our contacts, some of our folks didn't receive their ballots on time. Some received their ballots on time but it was just too late to get them over to the post office, and some were returned due to postage shortage. We're going have to really review this process through revised legislation. We can't deprive those folks from voting. I think the reason for this is because of the runoff requirement. We need to figure out a way to have this done earlier in the game."

Inos said one way of helping CEC get the runoff process going even before the Top 2 in the general elections are decided and if the topnotcher doesn't get 50 percent plus one of the vote, is to just mail an absentee ballot that only requires the absentee voter to write in the name of the candidate.

"The problem that this people have is they don't know who's going to be in the ballot after you're done with the general election. So I don't know, but just right off the cuff maybe they should get a certified blank ballot and just write it in. Fourteen days is just not enough with the current process. I think once we know who the two winners are, they should be able to have a way of knowing who these folks are and just write the names in and send the ballots in."

The governor also said another solution is not wait for the absentee ballots at all if votes between the No. 1 and No. 2 candidates are so wide it's already statistically impossible for the latter to make up the difference. He also suggested the return to a two-party system.

"The other one with this issue is we need to have a limit on the difference between the first and the second. You don't always want to have a situation like this. The other way is to go back to the two-party system where you have a primary. The only folks that are in the ballot would be the folks elected by each party of the primary process. In that way, the winner will be the person who received the highest votes."

Hofschneider-Yumul Committee-to-Elect chair David Attao, meanwhile said the runoff election in theory is a good concept but adequate time should be provided.

"Either have the general or primary election months earlier than the runoff in November with ample time for the CEC to send out ballots and voters to respond properly and without feeling rushed—as long as everyone has a chance to vote."

Like Inos, Attao hopes that CEC will works with the Legislature to provide input and come up with or borrow a more effective model for future runoff elections in the CNMI.

"There are probably more effective and efficient models of handling things like the runoff and multiple candidates and parties running for governor and lieutenant governor."

INOS-TORRES

From Page 1

votes from the absentee ballots while Hofschneider-Yumul got only 185 votes.

CEC's official results of the runoff race show that Inos-Torres garnered a total of 6,877 votes, while Hofschneider-Yumul got 5,133.

Of the estimated 2,100 absentee ballots mailed out, only 794 came back, but only 515 were found good and the rest of the ballots were rejected.

There were actually 823 ballots that came in but some were for the general elections, according to CEC executive director Robert Guerrero during the sorting of the ballots.

As of 5:30pm Friday, election workers were still sorting and checking the ballots.

Guerrero announced the counting results at 8:34pm.

The CEC board then convened a meeting and unanimously certified the gubernatorial election results at 8:43pm.

Only a few people watched the counting. The Inos-Torres team had no representative, while the Hofschneider-Yumul had one.

During the Nov. 4 four-way gubernatorial elections, Inos-Torres garnered a total of 6,342 votes, while the Hofschneider-Yumul came second with a total of 4,501.

Inos-Torres' 1,841 margin over Hofschneider-Yumul paved the way for the second runoff election in the CNMI last Nov. 21.

After the counting of ballots for the Nov. 4 general elections, defeated gubernatorial candidates Juan N. Babauta (independent) and Edward M. Deleon Guerrero (Democrat) immediately conceded and endorsed Inos-Torres for the runoff race.

This is Hofschneider's fourth failed attempt to become a governor of the CNMI. This year is also his second defeat in a gubernatorial runoff race.

Hofschneider won the general elections in 2009, but failed to gain a majority, paving a runoff against then-incumbent governor Benigno R. Fitial. Fitial eventually won the runoff by a margin of 370 votes.

Veterans bemoan healthcare access in the CNMI

By DENNIS B. CHAN
dennis_chan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Veteran Affairs officials hosted a townhall meeting Thursday night at the American Memorial Park Visitors Center to "connect with veterans" on island. Turnout out was strong, as were concerns about access to healthcare and benefits in the CNMI.

"Tonight is about listening to what you have to say," Tracey Betts, director for the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs' Honolulu Regional Office, told the crowd.

She explained why it was difficult for some to have their claims met. One veteran said he was fed up with being told, "We want more documents," for pain in his eyes and ears.

Betts said in approving a claim, they ask for discharge documents, personnel records, and service treatment records, among other information, to make a decision whether one's healthcare need is current, aggravated, or presumptive.

She said most of the time, because of lack of documents provided, claims sit in a pile called "gathering evidence." She added, though, that the VA has gone out of its way to ask for such information and to corroborate what veterans may claim.

A veteran who identified himself as John asked the VA officials to expand the office on Saipan. He called it "so small" that you could "hear all the dirty laundry" spoken between the office's sole doctor and patient.

One veteran asked a policy question on alternative medicine. According to him, he sent noni to his father, a veteran, who had cancer but he was told his father could be taken off his benefits if he continued with using noni.

VA Pacific Islands Health Care System director Wayne Pfeffer clarified that alternative medicine was allowed, like acupuncture, for example, but at limited access. Things like medical marijuana, though, have not been authorized at the national level.

A veteran named Joaquin described his genetic blood disorder, which requires him to have a therapeutic phlebotomy every two weeks to remove iron from his blood.

He claimed he had to wait as long as three months once to get his treatment done from the hospital here.

"To deal with CHC is the worst," he said. "Please help us."

DENNIS B. CHAN

Wayne Pfeffer, Veterans Affairs Pacific Islands Health Care System director, and Tracey Betts, director for the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs' Honolulu Regional Office hold a town hall meeting with veterans at the American Memorial Park Thursday night.

"A Tradition of Excellence!"

Marianas Eye Institute proudly welcome renowned eye surgeon, Dr. Dennis Williams, who has moved to Saipan to serve you and your families alongside Dr. Robertson. The tradition of excellence continues!

- Listed in "Best Doctors in America"
- Board Certified Ophthalmologist

Prior Experience:
- Assistant Clinical Professor of Ophthalmology, USF
- Director of Corneal Transplant and Refractive Surgery St. Luke's Cataract and Laser Institute, Florida
- Board of Directors, American Board of Eye Surgery
- President, Cataract Teaching Foundation
- Instructor, American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery

We welcome Aetna, Self-pay, Staywell, Netcare, Calvo's, TakeCare, Medicaid, Medicare, Tricare, Blue Cross Blue Shield, and more!

Marianas Eye Institute
"Where Technology Meets Talent"

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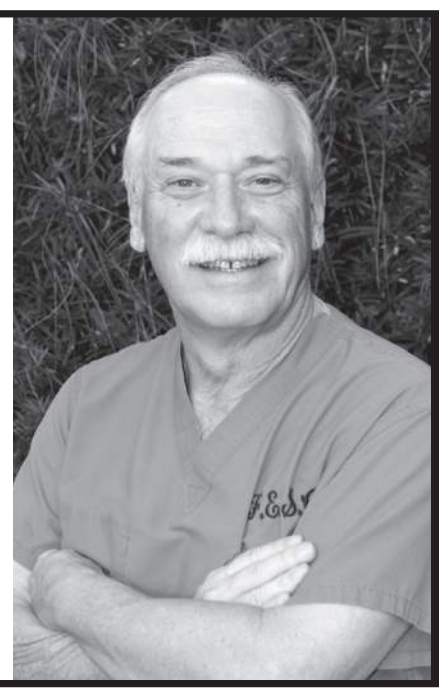
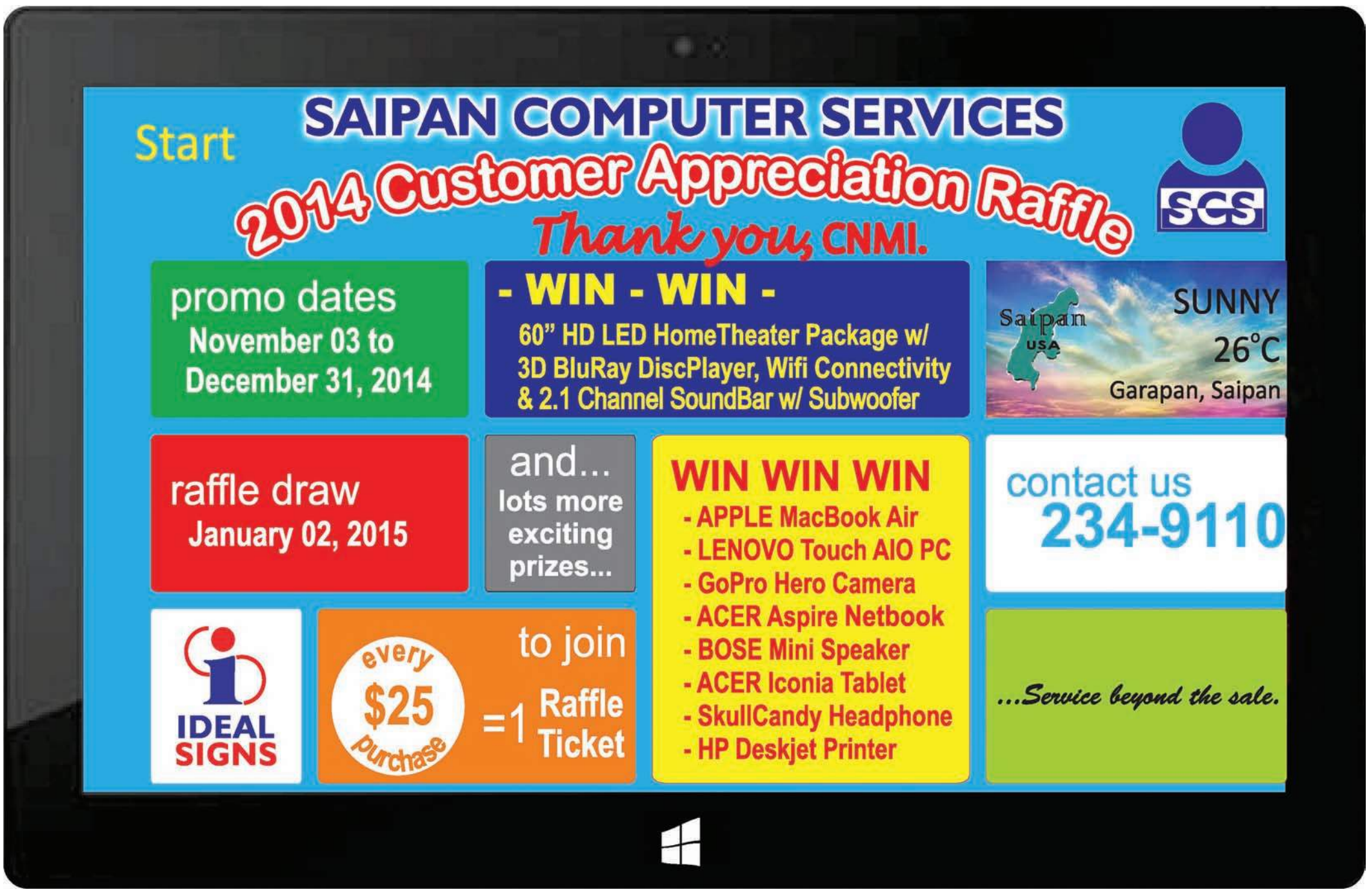
Walk-in's welcome
Beach Road Garapan.





Over 300 care packages mailed to CNMI service members

By JAYSON CAMACHO
jayson_camacho@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

About 338 care packages were put together and prepared for CNMI service members by Operation Homefront last Saturday morning at the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe.

This is the 7th edition of the annual CNMI Operation Homefront Support. Compared to last year, more care packages were sent out this year. Last year about 280 care packages were sent out.

CNMI Operation Homefront Support is a volunteer-led effort that sends out care packages to local soldiers deployed worldwide.

Operation Homefront founder Geri Willis said she started doing this annual packaging seven years ago and wanted to do something for the soldiers and knew that it was a great contribution "and we have been continuing this ever since."

Willis said Nola Hix assumed the lead role of organizing the event last year.

"She has been doing a tremendously great job and really getting those care packages for our soldiers," Willis said.

Saturday's care packages included letters of support from school children, newspapers, magazines, maps, T-shirts, local canned foods, local favorite snacks and other items unique to the islands.

Willis noted that she has received emails of appreciation and support from the soldiers when they receive their care packages. Some would also send emails asking for local products to share with other foreign soldiers.

"I love it and I received one email from a soldier that he had seen in the newspaper about Operation Homefront and we sent him one care package. A few times, soldiers who have come back and those students who wrote the letter from different schools and put it in the packaging, they come back to the school and meet the student sometimes," Willis said.

"We will continue this next year and we really appreciate what they do for us…and this is one way for the community to give back," Willis said.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Operation Homefront Support volunteers pose for a group photo Saturday morning at the Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe after helping put together about 338 care packages that will be mailed out to CNMI service members.

Christmas in the Marianas lights up Paseo

By JAYSON CAMACHO
jayson_camacho@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Dozens of schools lighted up the Paseo de Marianas with numerous Christmas trees on Saturday, kicking off the annual Christmas in the Marianas celebration and bringing the holiday spirit to the tourist district area in Garapan.

Hundreds of community members and tourists were cloaked in the presence of the holiday season, with carolers, singers, dancers, and other performers taking center stage and leading up to the highlight of Saturday's event, the annual Christmas tree decoration contest.

A countdown was set for the lighting of the Christmas trees and at exactly 6:15pm all the Christmas trees were lighted up.

The Saipan Awaodori Team provided the first entertainment number of the night, followed by various numbers from school representatives.

Food vendors were also available at the event.

PDI's Gordon Marciano said the event is a means for the Commonwealth to welcome all tourists to the islands during the holiday season and to celebrate the season's spirit with them.

Marianas Visitors Authority's community projects assistant Ryan Calvo said they prepared for the event for more than a month and talked to all the schools that wanted to participate.

"We are getting more and more participants and now this year we have more floats for the parade," Calvo said.

MVA managing director Perry Tenorio said Saturday's kick-off was a wonderful start to the Christmas season.

"With the streets lighted up, children are excited and the Christmas trees are beautiful. We wish everybody luck and hope they enjoy the event," he said.

The Christmas in the Marianas event will be hosted every Saturday for the month of December with different contests, entertainment, and food.

On Dec. 13, there will be a Christmas caroling contest. On Dec. 20 there will be a Marianas Walkers Association 5-kilometer Christmas Health Walk, Christmas Costume Show, a Christmas parade from the Carolinian Village to Paseo with a float contest, and stage entertainment from 6pm to 9pm. On Dec. 27 there will be a Mochitsuki Exhibition.

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
BOARD OF PAROLE
P.O. BOX 502641, Saipan, MP 96950-2641
Tel: NOS.: (670) 664-3300 – 3304 FAX: (670) 664-3310
E-mail: govbop@pticom.com

PUBLIC NOTICE
Executive Meeting

Governor Eloy S. Inos and Lt. Governor Jude U. Hofschneider, through the Board of Parole Office, and pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section II of the "Open Government Act of 1992". Notice is hereby given that an **Executive Meeting** is scheduled for **December 11, 2014, (Thursday)** beginning at **9:00 A.M.**, at the **Department of Corrections Briefing/Training Room, Susupe, Saipan.**

The following items are included in the agenda:

I. Preliminary Matters
- A) Call to order
- B) Roll Call
- C) Presence of Quorum

II. Consent Items
- A) Review/Adoption of Agenda
- B) Adoption of Executive Meeting Minutes – May 15, 2014

III. New Business
- A) Board Reorganization
- B) Courtesy Resignation Chief of Parole
- C) Adoption of Proposed Board of Parole Rules and Regulations

IV. Old Business
- A) Board Policy on the Conduct of Executive Meeting and Parole Hearings
- B) Board's Drug Testing Policy

V. Miscellaneous
- A) Other Matters

VI. Adjournment

If you have any question, please call the Parole Office at telephone number 664-3300 or 3302.

/s/ Ramon B. Camacho
Chairman

Date: 11/17/14

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

PUBLIC NOTICE
(This Notice is paid by NMHC with HUD Funds.)

Governor Eloy S. Inos, Lt. Governor Jude U. Hofschneider, and the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) Board of Directors, through its Chairwoman, Ms. Marcie M. Tomokane, wish to announce that its Consolidated Annual Performance Report (CAPER) for Program Year 2013 is available for review. Comments made by the general public should be submitted no later than 4:30 p.m. on December 22, 2014. Written comments must be submitted to the NMHC Office in Garapan, Saipan, P. O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950, or by contacting Ms. Jeannie P. Mafnas, Planner/Grant Writer, at 234-9447/7689.

The report will be submitted to the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Honolulu Office, by December 31, 2014. The CAPER encompasses the performance assessment of all HUD-funded programs, administered by the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, in the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands

The report is available at the NMHC Central Office in Saipan and at the respective NMHC Field Offices in Rota and Tinian during regular business hours, Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/
Marcie M. Tomokane
Chairwoman of the Board

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
BOARD OF PAROLE
P.O. BOX 502641, Saipan, MP 96950-2641
Tel: NOS.: (670) 664-3300 – 3304 FAX: (670) 664-3310
E-mail: govbop@pticom.com

PUBLIC NOTICE
Parole Hearing

Governor Eloy S. Inos and Lt. Governor Jude U. Hofschneider, through the Board of Parole Office, and pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section II of the "Open Government Act of 1992". Notice is hereby given that a Parole Hearing is scheduled for December 10, 2014, (Wednesday) beginning at 9:00 A.M., and if needed be to continue on December 11, 2014 (Thursday) at 8:30 A.M. at the Vicente Seman Building, Department of Corrections, Training and Briefing Room, Susupe, Saipan.

The following items are included in the agenda:

I. Preliminary Matters
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Presence of Quorum

II. Consent Items
1. Adoption of Agenda

III. Parole Application	**BOP No.**	**Criminal Case No.**
1. Alvin P. Lizama	14-001	11-0213T
2. Donald C. Arriola	14-005	12-0193T
3. Jesse James Camacho	13-011	98-175

IV. Re-Parole Application	**BOP No.**	**Criminal Case No.**
1. Manuel K. Pangelinan	88-0265	14-RA-003

V. Miscellaneous
1. Other Matters

VI. Adjournment

If you have any question, please call the Parole Office at telephone number 664-3300 or 3302.

/s/ Ramon B. Camacho
Chairman

Date: 11/26/2014

Robert Tenorio Torres
Attorney at Law
Plata Drive, Whispering Palms
P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 234-7859
Facsmile: (670) 234-5749
Attorney for Administrator:
Henry H. San Nicolas

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF:	) Civil Action) No. 13-0188
JOSE P. SAN NICOLAS, Decedent.	) NOTICE OF) HEARING ON THE) PETITION FOR) FINAL DECREE OF) DISTRIBUTION
	) Date: Dec. 16, 2014) Time: 1:30 P.M.) Judge: Wiseman

TO: THE GENERAL PUBLIC, ANY HEIRS, CLAIMANTS, OR CREDITORS OF THE LATE JOSE P. SAN NICOLAS:

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that **Henry H. San Nicolas**, Administrator of the Estate of Jose P. San Nicolas, has filed with the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands a **Petition for Final Decree of Distribution**. The attorney for Administration is **Robert T. Torres, Attorney at Law, whose address is Plata Drive, Chalan Kiya, P.O. Box 503758, Saipan, MP 96950**.

The hearing on the Petition for Final Decree of Distribution has been set for the **16th day of December, 2014 at 1:30pm** at the Superior Court of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, **Guma' Hustisia**, Civic Center, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All interested persons or entities should appear at this hearing.

Dated this 24th day of October 2014.

Clerk of Court
/s/ Deputy Clerk of Court

TINIAN CASINO GAMING CONTROL COMMISSION
Municipality of Tinian and Aguiguan
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Tinian Casino Gaming Control Commission (TCGCC) hereby gives notice that it will hold a Special Meeting on Tuesday, December 9, 2014, at 11:00 a.m. at the TCGCC Conference Room.

AGENDA

I. PRELIMINARY
- a. Call to Order
- b. Roll Call
- c. Adoption of Agenda

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS[1]

III. NEW BUSINESS
- a. Bridge Investment Group Conditional License Project Update

IV. EXECUTIVE SESSION[2]

V. ADJOURNMENT

[1] Public comments are limited to 30 minutes and each remark is limited to 3 minutes each. Everyone is welcomed to submit written comments.
[2] Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Commission may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

THE ART SCENE

FOA to host 'A Glee-ful Christmas Revue'

The Friends of the Arts will be holding its first program of this season, *A Glee-ful Christmas Revue*, an evening of Christmas music performed by the regional and national award winning Rhythm n' Harmony, the Marianas High School Glee Club, directed by Paul Dujua and produced by Harold Easton.

The program will have three performances on Dec. 12 and 13 starting at 7pm and a 3pm matinee on Dec. 14. All three shows will be at the Marianas High School's Dolphin Theatre.

The entrance fee will be $5 for all student Thespian members, $8 for students up through college, $12 for FOA members and $15 for non-FOA members. In recognition of the continued assistance of Marianas High School and the participation of the MHS Glee Club, all MHS students will be offered the $5 ticket price and all MHS staff will be offered the $12 member rate. Season ticket holders and their guests (one guest per season ticket) are already prepaid.

This program will help fund the Glee Club's trip to Guam next spring to participate in the Tumon Bay Music Festival. ***(PR)***

Glushko's Academy sets 'Christmas Concert'

Glushko's Academy of Performing Arts will be hosting a Christmas Concert on Dec. 14, Sunday, at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center. Show time is from 6pm to 7pm. Doors will be open at 5:30pm. Tickets, at only $10 for adults and $5 for children (3-12 years old) and are available at the door or by calling 483-6271 or email glushkosacademy@yahoo.com.

The concert will feature dances and music from your favorite Christmas carols! This event is a perfect get together with your family and friends to share the Holiday Spirit! This is a fundraising event is to raise money for the March 2015 International Ballet of Stars!

Saipan Pacific Winds, Manta Band sets Dec. show

Saipan Pacific Winds and the Saipan Southern High School's Manta Ray Band will be doing a show on Dec. 22, 2014, starting at 7pm at the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Center in Susupe. There will be more details emerging next week as we develop the program.

There will be no admission fee but donations are encouraged as the band fundraises for their competition tour to Los Angeles in June 2015 at Walt Disney Hall, home of the LA Philharmonic. A portion of the donations will be donated to a charity to be named soon. ***(PR)***

UOG Art and Theater Departments hosts design and art show

UOG students in two different fall 2014 Art classes, Basic Design and Studio for Non-Art Majors, will present more than 60 pieces of art in a public showcase, "Not a Blank Page": Design and Art Studio–Final Student Art Show, which will be held at Guma Tasa in Mangilao from Dec. 11 to 19. The event opens on Thursday, Dec. 11, and will feature a special presentation of original theatrical works from actors in the UOG Fall 2014 Acting I class. Student-prepared, homemade potluck-style dishes will be provided as part of the opening event. "Not a Blank Page": Design and Art Studio–Final Student Art Show is open to the public and admission is free of charge. For more information, contact Tali Ariav at talariav@hotmail.com. ***(UOG)***

Do you have anything happening that you'd like the public to know about? Just email the details to editor@saipantribune.com. Please include your contact name, email address, and phone number, in case we need to call you for additional details about your event.

CERTIFIED NURSING ASSISTANT (CNA) & CERTIFIED PHLEBOTOMY TECHNICIAN

ON-GOING REGISTRATION ENROLLMENT

Guam Marianas Training Center
Achieving Dreams through Educational Development

PINNACLE STAFFING

Health Care Careers are doubling every 2-4 years! So why not start yours today? Beat the recession, enjoy job security. Help people and provide for your family! Register today, to start your tomorrow!

Are you looking to gain some new skills on becoming a Certified Nursing Assistant or Certified Phlebotomy Technician? If so, Pinnacle Staffing, LLC in partnership with Guam Marianas Training Center (GMTC) will be conducting an 80 hours training course for Certified Phlebotomy Technician and a 160 hours training course for Certified Nursing Assistant.

All interested individuals may register at
Pinnacle Staffing, LLC office, conveniently located on the
2nd Floor of Kevins Department Store.
For more information, please contact us at
(670) 287-3773 or via email at contactus@pinnaclestaffing.co

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-15-002

POWER SUPPLY RESOURCES

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from qualified and experienced entities to supply reliable, affordable energy from commercially proven electric generation resources for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The solicitation seeks responses from suitably qualified entities from which CUC intends to select one, or more, proponent(s) to negotiate long-term power supply contracts that best fit CUC's power supply requirements. CUC's requirements for new power supply resources will be determined as part of its Integrated Resource Plan, which is currently underway. More information regarding the Integrated Resource Plan can be found at the CUC's website at http://www.cucgov.org/integrated-resource-plan/.

The RFP documents may be downloaded from the CUC website at http://www.cucgov.org/power-supply-rfp/. It is each proponent's responsibility to ensure they have received all RFP documents posted to this website. An updated checklist will be provided in early January, titled "RFP Document Receipt Checklist and Affirmation" prior to the submittal deadline. In order to reduce the cost to CUC of this procurement and in the interest of sustainable business practices, CUC will not be providing printed RFP materials; all RFP materials will be posted and distributed electronically.

Prospective proponents for this RFP must register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division, by filling out and submitting a Proponent Registration Form by 10:00 am December 15, 2014 in order to be considered. The Proponent Registration Form is posted to the website at http://www.cucgov.org/power-supply-rfp/ and can be delivered in printed format or electronically via email to the CUC Procurement Contact for Power Supply RFP:

Manny B. Sablan, Jr.
Purchasing Officer
Address: Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Third Floor, Room 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Bldg.
P.O. Box 501220, Dandan, Saipan MP, 96950
Office Phone: (670) 236-4303
Email: manny.sablan@cucgov.org.

The deadline for proposal submittals is currently scheduled for January 20, 2015, although this date may be subject to change. Changes to the proposal schedule will be posted as addenda to the Request for Proposal documents.

One printed, hardcopy original and five copies of all proposal material and supporting documents (including the Technical Proposal requirements, the Cost Proposal requirements, and all supplementary data requested as part of Appendix A, Appendix B, and Appendix C) must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC RFP 15-002, Power Supply Resources" to CUC Procurement & Supply Division, 3rd Floor, Room No.3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O.Box 501220, Dandan, Saipan MP 96950, no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on January 20, 2015. One electronic copy of the Technical Proposal and related documents, and one electronic copy of the Cost Proposal and related documents, in Adobe pdf format on a DVD, also must be delivered with the other printed, hardcopy proposal materials.

Proponents are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the proponents due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of proponents' preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract. Questions or requests for clarification will be considered only from registered proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than December 17, 2104 to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Officer via email addressed to manny.sablan@cucgov.org. CUC will host a Pre-Proposal Conference and Webinar on December 4, 2014 to discuss the Request for Proposals and answer questions. Information regarding the Pre-Proposal Conference and Webinar will be provided to registered proponents.

Proponents shall be accorded fair and equal treatment. There shall be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing proponents.

This Request for Proposal does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals in anticipation of a contract. This request and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

All responses to this RFP should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the proponent awarded a contract. Successful proponents will be required to submit a copy of a valid CNMI Business license in compliance with the Contractor's Registration and Licensing Laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, upon award of the contract. The Contractor and all subcontractors will be obligated to pay wage rates not less than the current CNMI minimum wage, prevailing through the period of contract, as indicated in the web page: https://marianaslabor.net/. The proponents shall be required to comply with all applicable CNMI and Federal Laws.

ALAN W. FLETCHER
Executive Director

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-15-003

Water & Wastewater Laboratory Services

The Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), Office of the Executive Director is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from DECQ certified firms to provide laboratory services for the islands of Saipan, Tinian and Rota in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The RFP package may be obtained upon completion of registration and receipt of a non-refundable deposit from the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $100.00 for one set from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays. Prospective Proposers must register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division.

A Pre-Proposal Conference will be held on **November 26, 2014 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room 15, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Dandan, Saipan.

One (1) original and Five (5) copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "*CUC-RFP-15-003*, Water & Wastewater Laboratory Services", to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than **December 12, 2014 at 10:00 AM (ChST)**. Late submissions and conditional offers will not be considered.

All Offerors are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Offeror due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal under the contract.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible proposers for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of, and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. Proposers shall be accorded fair and equal treatment. There shall be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing proposers.

This Request for Proposal does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals in anticipation of a contract. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. The contractor shall be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws.

All questions or request for clarification must be submitted in writing no later than **November 28, 2014 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** to Manny B. Sablan, Jr., CUC Procurement & Supply Manager via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Heidi Yelin, CUC Laboratory Manager, via email heidi.yelin@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

/s/ ALAN W. FLETCHER
Executive Director

/s/ MANNY B. SABLAN
Manager, Procurement & Supply

2nd Diocesan Youth Camp strengthens parish faith, camaraderie

By THOMAS MANGLONA II
CORRESPONDENT

The Diocese of Chalan Kanoa hosted its second annual Youth Camp over the Thanksgiving weekend at the Mount Carmel School campus.

The camp, coordinated by parish officials, brought together youth from all parishes on Saipan for an overnight stay at the private school.

According to Deacon James Balajadia, the event featured sports, youth sacrament, confession, a cemetery cleanup, vocation presentations, and Bible talks.

"I am glad that they have this and I am happy to be a part of it," Balajadia said. "I hope for it to continue in the years to come."

The deacon said it was inspiring to see how many youth attended the camp with the thirst to know Jesus more and learn more about the testimony of the Gospel.

One attendee, Miller Bundoc, said he attended the camp for another year to bond with his parish sisters and brothers.

"In the short two days we spent together, I bonded with people I do not normally talk with. This camp have definitely changed my perspective on a lot of things," the Mount Carmel student told *Saipan Tribune*. "This strengthens my faith and belief in the Gospel. I hope that more people come each year."

It was San Vicente altar server Maria Dizon's first time to camp out with fellow youth parishioners. She said the youth often feel that they are far from God's word.

"Coming here gives all of us the opportunity to come and bond together no matter what parish they are from," she said.

Baby Kano, a long-time parishioner, said she makes time to chaperone the youth campers each year to see them interact religiously. "This is really all about the youth. They learn more about their faith and worship together."

THOMAS A. MANGLONA II

Youth parishioners from the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa pose for a photo during the 2nd annual Diocesan Youth Camp last weekend at Mount Carmel School.

NMC English and Math placement test schedule

The Northern Marianas College will be conducting English and math placement tests on the following dates:

- Dec. 15, 16, 19, 24, 31: 9am
- Dec. 22, 23, 29, 30 and Jan. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9: 9am and 2pm
- Dec. 26 and Jan. 2: 1pm

Those who wish to take courses at NMC must take the placement tests. The deadline to apply for admission for NMC's spring 2015 semester is Jan. 16, 2015.

Before taking a placement test, individuals must first fill out a Placement Request Form at the Office of Admissions and Records (Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm) and pay the $25 fee for each placement test at the NMC Cashier (Monday to Friday,8:30am to 4pm). Payment for the admission application fee will cover the English placement test fee. Students will not be allowed to take the placement tests without their processed Placement Request Form and a valid photo ID (driver's license, passport or school ID).

Those planning on taking the placement test are highly encouraged to make seating arrangements prior to the test date by contacting Isabel Matsunaga at the Testing Center in Building I at 234-5498 Ext. 6774 or by emailing isabel.matsunaga@marianas.edu.

Note that English placement test is a computer-based and tests on Listening, Reading and Grammar, and the final part of the test requires an essay on a provided topic.

The math placement test is also computer-based; pencils and scratch paper are provided at the Testing Center if test takers need to write some calculations out when answering questions. Also, the use of approved types of calculators is allowed during the math placement test (contact the Testing Center to find out if your calculator may be used).

For more information or to make arrangements regarding the placement tests, contact Matsunaga at the Testing Center in Building I at 234-5498 Ext. 6774 or by emailing isabel.matsunaga@marianas.edu. For additional information about placement tests and NMC's spring 2015 semester, log on to marianas.edu. ***(NMC)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands

Judiciary Administrative Office
Guma' Hustisia · Iimwal Aweewe · House of Justice
P.O. Box 502165 · Saipan MP 96950
T: (670) 236-9715 · F: (670) 236-9702

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Judiciary is seeking a highly motivated individual for the position of:

DEPUTY MARSHAL II
On the island of SAIPAN

DUTIES: The successful candidate will work under the Director of Law Enforcement and Security in the Marshal Service Division on Saipan which involves the enforcement and execution of judicial orders and assigned law enforcement duties. The duties of this position include, but are not limited to the following:

- Performs general court security duties, including providing safety and security during judicial proceedings, providing protection from harm and personal injury to assigned justices, judges, court personnel, clients, jurors and witnesses;
- Provide protection from damage and vandalism to the court facilities, equipment and other related resources;
- Assist with all necessary inspection and screening of persons and items entering the court facilities restricting from entry those that are prohibited within the court premises;
- Assists in transporting and escorting prisoners and other detainees who are awaiting court appearance. This includes transporting prisoners from the Department of Public Safety (or from other locations as instructed) to the courthouse and return; from the courthouse holding cells to the courtrooms and return, and other related work;
- Provide physical and electronic security monitoring of all assigned areas under the control of the Marshal Division;
- Assist in protecting and transporting (if necessary) jurors and other court personnel during jury trial and deliberation;
- Assist with court bailiff functions;
- Assist in the preparation of reports of service and no-service, including submission of daily activity and incident reports;
- Provides the general public with direction and general information on all judicial service locations with the courthouse;
- Attends and successfully completes all training courses as directed by the Director of Law Enforcement and Security, including but not limited to, any law enforcement officers training courses offered through the Northern Marians College;
- Assists the other Deputy Marshals in their duties; and
- Performs other duties on the courthouse premises as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS: Candidate must have a high school diploma or any combination equivalent to graduation from an accredited college or university with a bachelor's degree, plus a minimum of two (2) years experience in legal, law enforcement, court work or related field of study. Successful candidate must provide current police and traffic clearances and proof of eligibility to work in the CNMI. Applicants given a conditional offer of employment with the CNMI Judiciary will be required to submit to urinalysis to screen for the illegal use of drugs prior to employment.

COMPENSATION AND TENURE: This is an ungraded position appointed and served at the pleasure of the Chief Justice. Salary will be $18,585 annually.

INTERESTED PERSONS may obtain application forms at the OPM offices in the CNMI, at the Judiciary Administrative Office at the Guma Hustisia/Iimwal Aweewe/House of Justice in Susupe, or at the Superior Court offices on Tinian and Rota. Completed applications, cover letter, and three references should be submitted to:

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Judiciary is seeking a highly motivated individual for the position of:

DEPUTY CLERK I
Office of the Clerk of Court
Superior Court
SAIPAN

DUTIES: This position is under the general supervision of the Presiding Judge and the direct supervision of the Clerk of Court or his/her designee. The employee performs work in accordance with established policies, practices, and court procedures. The following are required duties:

- Receives, reviews, and records documents filed for hearings;
- Provides data entry of pleadings onto the court's case management system;
- Provides daily updates of pleadings and other caseload information for the assigned judge through the court's automated processes, including, but not limited to, the document imaging and online filing system;
- Assesses fines, receives and accounts for monies, issues receipts, prepares deposit slips and provides disbursements per court order or requests from customer service window;
- Prepares and maintains physical and electronic file folders for court cases, including tracking of all pleadings associated with individual cases files;
- Serves as a courtroom clerk when court hearings are in session, including, but not limited to, swearing in of witnesses, logging of all admitted exhibits, tracking all phases of a hearing on an index sheet for the recording counter, operating the electronic recording equipment, and providing continuous monitoring of the recording equipment to ensure the integrity of the record; and,
- Performs other related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS: Must have a high school diploma or equivalent plus a minimum of three (3) years related work experience. There is a strong preference for those with work experience in the legal field and those with a Bachelor's Degree. Successful candidate must provide current police and traffic clearances and proof of eligibility to work in the CNMI.

COMPENSATION AND TENURE: This is an ungraded position appointed and serves at the pleasure of the Presiding Judge. The salary will be $20,485 annually.

INTERESTED PERSONS may obtain application forms at OPM offices in the CNMI, the Judiciary Administrative Office at the Guma Hustisia/Iimwal Aweewe/House of Justice in Susupe, or at the Superior Court offices on Tinian and Rota. Completed applications, cover letter, and three references should be submitted to:

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Karidat in need of toy drive sponsor

According to the Karidat office, no toy drives for the holidays have been officially planned but they are open to one if a sponsor for toys were found.

According to the office, one member from the community, a recently elected House representative, did reach out and they are waiting word from him.

As for a food drive, parishes from the community did donate cans of food during Thanksgiving, but they do not anticipate a food drive for the upcoming holidays ahead.

Karidat Social Services is non-profit charitable organization, and one of Saipan's premier social services arm. Including food or toy drives, they also case manage community members under the Emergency Solutions Grant Program, which offers financial assistance to people who are at risk of being homeless or are homeless, conducting quarterly visits to households under the program. ***(Dennis B. Chan)***

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday to Makie Custodio! No matter how many birthdays come and go, you'll always be our little boy, our greatest pride and joy! Wishing you a very happy birthday! Greetings come from your loving family and friends.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday to my beautiful *nina*, Kuleta M. Taitano! Enjoy your day and may you have many more blessings! Greetings come from your goddaughter, Aguida C. Villagomez.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday to a wonderful, loving wife and the greatest mother ever, Kuleta M. Taitano! Enjoy your day. We love you always! Greetings come from Joe, Jon, CJ, and JR.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday greetings go out to MaeMae (7 years old) and Jonah Marc (1 year old), who are both celebrating their birthdays today, Dec. 8, at PIC. With love, from Cornerstone Christian Church Sunday School kids!

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Belated happy 4th birthday to Rhian Napu and happy 55th birthday to Grandpa Rudy! We love you both so much. May the Lord continue to shine His love on you. Greetings come from Tyreen, Beng, and Noreen.

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Judiciary is seeking a highly motivated individual for the position of:

PROBATION OFFICER I

DUTIES: The successful candidate will work under the Chief Probation Officer in the Office of Adult Probation on Saipan which involves investigating, monitoring and/or supervising various levels and types of offenders' court ordered probation. The duties of this position include, but are not limited to the following:

- Performs all assigned duties relating to probationers' cases scheduled for court hearings;
- Investigates thoroughly offenders' personal history, background and environment;
- Gathers and evaluates data pertinent to individual cases from resource areas like the offenders' home, school, church, social agencies, neighborhood contacts, etc.
- Conducts interviews with probationers according to approved techniques in order to determine and clarify probationers' problems, and consulting with the supervisor as necessary, suggests constructive methods for dealing with such problems;
- Contacts public and private community agencies to secure their aid in solving probationers' problems. Maintains a continuing and ongoing relationship with the agencies as necessary;
- Documents facts and testifies in Court with respect to the Probationers' activities, behavior, and quality of adjustment while under supervision;
- Appears in Court for the purpose of providing testimony on Probation cases;
- Enforces Court Orders involving Probation cases;
- Attends public relations activities, conferences and field visits in connection with investigation and supervision functions; and
- Performs other law enforcement and public safety related duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS: Candidate must have a high school diploma or equivalent and have obtained a bachelors degree from a recognized college or university. Have three (3) years experience in legal, law enforcement and/or court work. Successful candidate must provide current police and traffic clearances and proof of eligibility to work in the CNMI. Applicants given a conditional offer of employment with the CNMI Judiciary will be required to submit to urinalysis to screen for the illegal use of drugs prior to employment.

COMPENSATION AND TENURE: This position is appointed by and serves at the pleasure of the Presiding Judge. Salary will be $20,485 annually.

INTERESTED PERSONS may obtain application forms at the OPM offices in the CNMI, at the Judiciary Administrative Office at the Guma Hustisia/Iimwal Aweewe/House of Justice in Susupe, or at the Superior Court offices on Tinian and Rota. Completed applications, cover letter, and three references should be submitted to:

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Judiciary is seeking a highly motivated individual for the position of:

DEPUTY MARSHAL I
On the island of ROTA

DUTIES: The successful candidate will work under the Director of Law Enforcement and Safety in the Marshal Service Division on Saipan which involves the enforcement and execution of judicial orders and assigned law enforcement duties. The duties of this position include, but are not limited to the following:

- Performs enforcement and execution of court orders and service documents such as jury summons;
- Performs court security duties required for judicial proceedings, protection of justices, judges, court staff, clients, jurors, witnesses, and judicial facilities; assists in the operation of the court's security control monitoring systems;
- Conducts inspection and screening of all persons entering the courthouse and prohibits the entrance onto the court's premises of any items that are restricted or prohibited; provides the public with direction and information on all public services locations within the courthouse;
- Prepares written reports of service and non-service documents, incidents, and other reports as required;
- Performs prisoner handling while awaiting court hearings; escorts prisoners to courtrooms and to holding cells as directed;
- Has knowledge of and follows courtroom directives;
- Completes annually all required training including firearms; complies to all procedures relative to the proper use, maintenance, and security of government issued firearms;
- Performs other duties on the courthouse premises as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS: Candidate must have a high school diploma or equivalent, a minimum of two (2) years experience in law enforcement and/or one year college level education in criminal justice or related field of study. Successful candidate must provide current police and traffic clearances and proof of eligibility to work in the CNMI. Applicants given a conditional offer of employment with the CNMI Judiciary will be required to submit to urinalysis to screen for the illegal use of drugs prior to employment.

COMPENSATION AND TENURE: This is an ungraded position appointed and served at the pleasure of the Chief Justice. Salary will be $16,652 annually.

INTERESTED PERSONS may obtain application forms at the OPM offices in the CNMI, at the Judiciary Administrative Office at the Guma Hustisia/Iimwal Aweewe/House of Justice in Susupe, or at the Superior Court offices on Tinian and Rota. Completed applications, cover letter, and three references should be submitted to:

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Judiciary is seeking a highly motivated individual for the position of:

DEPUTY MARSHAL I
On the island of SAIPAN

DUTIES: The successful candidate will work under the Director of Law Enforcement and Safety in the Marshal Service Division on Saipan which involves the enforcement and execution of judicial orders and assigned law enforcement duties. The duties of this position include, but are not limited to the following:

- Performs enforcement and execution of court orders and service documents such as jury summons;
- Performs court security duties required for judicial proceedings, protection of justices, judges, court staff, clients, jurors, witnesses, and judicial facilities; assists in the operation of the court's security control monitoring systems;
- Conducts inspection and screening of all persons entering the courthouse and prohibits the entrance onto the court's premises of any items that are restricted or prohibited; provides the public with direction and information on all public services locations within the courthouse;
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Opinion

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EDITORIAL

Eric Garner decision defies belief

What happened Wednesday is incomprehensible.

A Staten Island grand jury voted not to bring criminal charges against NYPD Officer Daniel Pantaleo, who threw his arm around Eric Garner's neck last summer in what looked much like a departmentally prohibited chokehold.

Garner cried again and again, "I can't breathe." Then he was dead.

The disturbing viral video shot by a bystander was an emotional gut punch. It was, and still is, difficult to watch. Video can mislead, of course. But what we thought we saw was bluntly buttressed by New York City's medical examiner, who said Garner's death was a homicide resulting from the chokehold and the compression of his chest by police officers.

And now we're back where we were last week in Ferguson, Mo., back where we never really left, with a grand jury's inaction reverberating profoundly and volatilely across the country. And with questions we have been unable to answer—about our nation's troubled racial history, about the distrust that exists between minorities and police departments, and about why some of us are not treated equally under the law.

Garner was black. Pantaleo is white. Ferguson victim Michael Brown was black; then-police Officer Darren Wilson, who was not indicted by a St. Louis County grand jury, is white.

But the two cases are different. In Ferguson, conflicting testimony and evidence made it impossible to decipher what transpired, and whether Wilson should have felt threatened by Brown.

Garner, on the other hand, did not pose a lethal threat to anyone—not to the police officers who surrounded him, not to bystanders. He was resisting arrest on suspicion of selling "loosies"—individual cigarettes—a very minor allegation.

We wish Staten Island District Attorney Daniel Donovan could step forward to explain why the grand jury declined to bring charges. If there's a sound legal basis for that decision, we'd like to know it. But state law doesn't permit him to discuss the salient details. And that lack of clarity leaves us with another crisis of boiling racial anger that must be addressed. Why are people of color treated differently by the police?

"This is an American problem, and not just a black problem," President Barack Obama said. "It's my job as president to help solve it." He should, and assertively.

The Department of Justice has launched a civil rights investigation into the Garner killing. But we need more. Obama has said he'll set up a task force to bring more transparency to law enforcement and mend a fractured relationship between police and the communities they protect. That's a start.

We've made great progress over the years, but the past has a long and haunting reach. America's race problem has taken a serious turn for the worse.

It's time that we honestly confront it.

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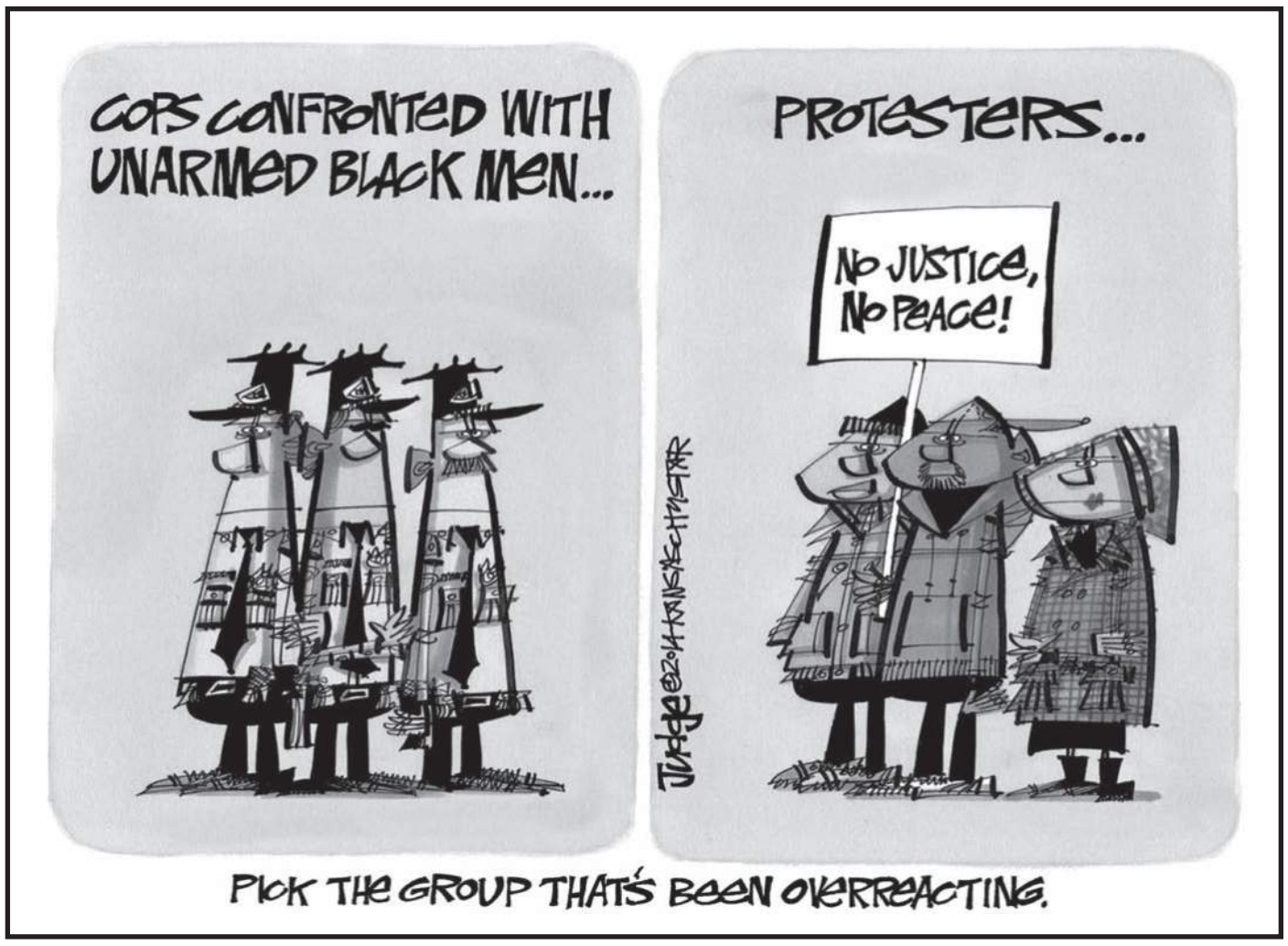

Japan's Pearl Harbor infamy

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime Vergara previously taught at SVES in the CNMI. A peripatetic pedagogue, he last taught in China but makes Honolulu, Shenyang, and Saipan home. He can be reached at pinoypanda2031@aol.com.

One thing I agree with PM Shinzo Abe of Japan is the nation's sole option to decide who they visit among their dead, and whichever Shinto shrine they need to go to. Whether Japan is sufficiently contrite about its actions and/or response to other's experiences of its "atrocities" from the Meiji restoration period to the end of World War II are separate issues. Its contrition is its business; morality cannot be coerced or imposed.

Imperial forces of Japan dealing with the Koreas and China must be judged by standards at the time the "atrocities" happened in the context of relations contemporaneous to the events being judged. In this light, it shall be obvious that military behavior of Japan, China, and Korea (subordinate to Japan's command since Nippon's occupation of the peninsula) when judged has none coming out with clean hands.

Historical accounts on the Philippines, Singapore, Malaya and Burma have to be read in view of the relationships Japan had with the US and the UK particularly as it involved oil. Some in Indonesia welcomed Japan because it emboldened their national movements against the Dutch in the same way that it fueled nascent nationalism in Singapore and Malaya vis-a-vis the Brits. Some of Manila's highly regarded families collaborated with Japan as the latter encouraged Co-Prosperity Sphere among Asians, and the promise to banish dominant colonial powers.

This is not to excuse Japan from the judgment of history, though we recognize that victors get to write the historical account. Nor were Koreans whose atrocities in the Philippines under Nippon's command are waived. It is to make us aware that the images we have made of Japan's actions have been painted with the victorious brush of political whine more than the concrete celluloid of what is real.

What do we make now of Roosevelt's famous "a date which will live in infamy" speech after the attack on Pearl Harbor? Japan warred against China before the Manchus lost their rule at the end of the Qing Dynasty. The Great Wall is north of Tianjin in Hebei and Manchuria was north of the China of the Han, thus fair game to Tojo. The Qing Dynasty regulated Han settlement in Manchuria during its rule but like the Mongols' Mongolia that was absorbed by China, the Han took over Manchu land that Japan later expanded into from the Koreas. The rising sun rose high. Ironically, after Japan lost WWII, the area became the launch pad of Mao Zedong's revolution.

That's chronologically ahead of our story. Japan needed coal and oil from Manchuria. The Japanese, like the Americans after the Depression, were split between isolationists and expansionists.

Japan's expansionist military prevailed against Russia's Navy at the turn of the century, encouraged massive migration of Japanese farm workers into Manchuria (a region in Imperial Japan's view geographically and culturally outside of *Zhongguo*), and drooled over a share of the minerals in Indonesia and Malaysia that the Dutch and the British exploited. China was in turmoil as nationalists and communists battled for the nation's heart and geography, so it was easy picking for Nippon's army to march China's nationals out of its capitals.

Japan's oil supply, critical for its industrialization, was blocked in the Strait of Malacca by the US Navy, itself feeling its oats in the Philippines, sending Nippon's militants to the drawing board to attack the Naval Base at Pearl Harbor.

U.S. educated Admiral Yamamoto who commanded the assault on Pearl Harbor was lucid that unless the assault incapacitated the US Navy, getting Uncle Sam into the World War would not do well for Japan. It thus came to pass that the "sneak attack" on Oahu got the expansionists of America to prevail against their isolationist compatriots to gear up for "life, liberty and democracy."

Imperial Japan's overextended forces in the Pacific, KMT's hold on China, resistance in the Philippines and Malaya, and the resurgent Allies at the periphery, made Nippon's war machine one hell of an operation. The reluctant Admiral Yamamoto would not live to see the reality of his heartache as his plane was ambushed in Bougainville after the US broke Nippon's code. Japan slid back into its island fortress and ended up becoming the testing ground for America's nuclear arsenal.

Expansionist America turned imperial after Breton Woods and found use of Nippon's material production, its *zaibatsu* (Mitsubishi made the Zero) were kept intact to support the new thrust in Korea that turned it to America's unofficial 51st State; Vietnam's oil was denied by Ho Chi Minh, and US military presence in Pinas got wiped out by Pinatubo's volcanic lahar.

Abe drumming up Japanese nationalism is in order. Time to put the mono-heartstrings of "a date which will live in infamy" to rest. China, Japan, the Koreas and East Pacific Asia (US West Coast) trace the same DNA. Time to salve the scars of war without forgetting history, and communally sing and dance.

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Internet 'expression' v. freedom of speech

By CHRISTINE M. FLOWERS
Philadelphia Daily News

Christine M. Flowers is a lawyer and columnist for the Philadelphia Daily News. *Readers may send her email at cflowers1961@gmail.com.*

When you write anything for public consumption, and when it ends up on the web in some shape or form, you can be absolutely certain that unless you are the pope (and even when you are) there will be objectionable comments from the peanut gallery. And, despite my almost fanatical devotion to the concept of Free Speech, I've developed a peanut allergy.

That's my fey and not-so-clever way of saying that I'm not a huge fan of the more vitriolic opinions that bubble up from the tarry depths of the Internet, to the extent that I usually ignore them. I used to read almost everything people would write in response to my columns, but that ship-as ill-fated as the Titanic-sailed years ago.

Every now and then, however, word gets back to me about something someone wrote online, and I am reminded of just how foul some human beings can be in their thoughts if not their actual actions. This recently occurred to me when I wrote about statutes of limitations and a pyjamaed, basement-dwelling Neanderthal who spends most of his time cashing mama's Social Security checks lodged a threat against a family member.

I really don't care what they say about me, and I've heard it all, usually from women who believe in choice, namely, the choice to defame women who disagree with them on reproductive matters. But when you start attacking family members, I draw the line in the virtual sand.

That's why I paid particular attention to the oral arguments held this Monday at the Supreme Court concerning Internet "expression" and whether comments can rise to the level of illegal, unconstitutional threats.

It's always interesting to watch the court when it weighs the relative value of speech because so much of our identity as a nation is defined by our ability to express ourselves without constraint. The First Amendment only truly applies to prospective interference by the government, although there are so many quasi-governmental entities in the country that Uncle Sam isn't the only one that gets sued.

In the case before the court, an estranged husband from our own backyard in the Third Circuit had been convicted of threatening his wife, violating a law that barred threats over the Internet. Anthony Elonis, an Allentown native, had claimed that he was just like any rapper out there talking about what he'd like to do to the "ho that did him wrong, dawg..." (As we have come to see, poet laureates are not the ones who are most in need of those First Amendment protections.)

Some of the things that Elonis wrote on his Facebook page were extremely disturbing. But Elonis' attorney argued that even though comments like "And I am not going to rest until your body is a mess/soaked in blood and dying from all the little cuts" could appear threatening (these must be Harvard grads,) it was important to look at the subjective intent of the writer/speaker and not the language's effect on the reader/listener.

Frankly, that's a very dangerous road to start traveling down and it flies in the face of what I learned as a lawyer about the "reasonable man." While it may be difficult to find a reasonable man in this age of expression on steroids, it's necessary to have some kind of standard so that we don't have to wade into the fetid mental waters of the kind of people who think threatening to shoot up a kindergarten is OK (yes, Elonis did that too.)

Not surprisingly, the ACLU and other civil libertarians have come down on the side of the mediocre rapper boy from Allentown and have urged the court not to find Internet threats to be as bad as, say, yelling fire in a movie theater. And the high court itself has made some major mistakes in the past in this area as, for example, when it held that burning a cross is not necessarily "threatening expression." (Tell that to anyone who grew up black in the 1950s.)

As someone who regularly gets attacked for her opinions—and welcomes dancing around in that hot kitchen—I can tell the difference between blowing off steam and real threats. I don't need to get inside the head of every person who wants to see me drawn and quartered, or forced to date Bill Maher, which is obviously equally unpleasant. And I also don't need a psychology degree to perceive true malicious intent when its directed at one of my family members.

Free speech is a wonderful thing, and an important one. But criminals cannot hide behind the beauty of the First Amendment to shield them from their just deserts. A pissed-off husband with delusions of Eminem grandeur is not the type of person Oliver Wendell Holmes was talking about when he wrote: "I think that we should be eternally vigilant against attempts to check the expression of opinions that we loathe and believe to be fraught with death, unless they so imminently threaten immediate interference with the lawful and pressing purposes of the law that an immediate check is required to save the country."

Or then again, maybe he was.

Take guesswork out of police work

By LANE FILLER
NEWSDAY

If one thing could improve the tenor of the debate over events in Ferguson, Mo., it would be having some idea of what actually happened. So yeah, I support body cameras for cops.

President Barack Obama has proposed federal funding for 50,000 cameras. It's a start. The units are generally about three inches long, clip to uniforms, and transmit video for storage via the Internet, usually while recharging.

In Rialto, California, population 102,000, body cameras were rolled out in 2012. In the following 12 months, complaints against officers declined 88 percent and use-of-force incidents by officers decreased almost 60 percent.

Maybe cops behaved better. Maybe civilians behaved better. Maybe the fact that the recording existed prevented baseless complaints. I don't much care why the improvement happened. I just think police-civilian interaction improves when it's recorded.

Michael Brown, black and 18, was repeatedly and fatally shot by police Officer Darren Wilson, white and 28, in August. And we know that shortly before being shot by Wilson, Brown stole cigars and shoved a store clerk. Everything else, though, is open to debate because the many witnesses disagree. They disagree with each other, and in many cases their testimony disagrees with itself, having changed over time.

The fiercest arguing is created by a lack of information combined with prejudices on both sides, which are not quite the same as deep hatreds. The difference is important.

You can have a bias against cops, but see a video of an enraged and scary man charging a police officer and say, "While I have no love for the man in blue, I'd have shot that guy a bunch of times, too. He was coming strong, with scary and murderous intent."

You also can have a bias against young black men but see a video of a white cop repeatedly shooting an unarmed young black man whose arms were up in a gesture of surrender and say, "While I have no love for a thug who steals cigars or messes with clerks, no way did the cop need to keep shooting at him. The kid should probably be in jail, but he shouldn't be dead."

I believe we are a nation of people who often have certain prejudices. We tend to side with people who look like us, live like us, talk like us, earn like us and are as old as us. I don't believe we are a people consumed by fierce hatreds. There are a few infected with such poison, but not many.

No information will sway those few true haters. The cop haters will always believe the cops are wrong, and the black haters will always believe blacks are wrong, but mostly nobody cares what such people think ... because we know they don't really think at all.

To me, cop cams aren't controversial. The mayor of Boston says his officers don't need them, calling the idea "a distraction." Earlier this year, a police union in Miami fought a plan to use the cameras, arguing they would "distract officers from their duties, and hamper their ability to act and react in dangerous situations." Some argue the cameras invade privacy, but the American Civil Liberties Union is now in favor.

Officers have no right to privacy on duty. And the civilians they come in contact with, mostly in public, don't either.

Equipping 700,000 officers in the United States with body cameras could be done for around $1 billion, and federal funding isn't necessarily needed. Police departments usually have forfeiture funds. This is a perfect example of how best to deploy such money.

Doing so would limit confrontations between officers and civilians, which means fewer insurance payouts for departments. Even when those confrontations are not prevented, the cameras can give us information, which is more useful than bias in deciding who is right and who is wrong.

Lane Filler is a member of the Newsday editorial board. He wrote this for Newsday.

Trial only for public good is always bad

By DAVID S. GOULD
NEWSDAY

On Wednesday, a Staten Island grand jury in the apparent chokehold death of Eric Garner did not indict the officer in the case. The decision will be treated as indistinguishable from the Michael Brown case in Ferguson, Missouri, by those who insist that the case was only about cops killing African-Americans with impunity.

In fact, the two tragic deaths are dramatically different. The "provocation" in the Brown case, hitting an officer and trying to steal his gun, was more deserving of a strong reaction than was Garner's attempt to avoid being arrested on suspicion of selling untaxed cigarettes. And no one knows for certain what happened during Brown's confrontation while, thanks to a bystander's video, we know what happened in the Garner case.

There is no doubt that police are often trigger-happy when confronted with blacks, and often act more like occupiers than public servants in African-American communities. But using the tragic death of Brown to prove that case to the public is the equivalent of holding up the O.J. Simpson criminal case as proof that police often frame innocent black men.

If, as is likely, there would've been an acquittal of Ferguson Officer Darren Wilson at trial—and even if everyone agreed it was a fair trial—it would have never satisfied those upset at the non-indictment.

Let's not forget that the mantra "No justice, no peace" is more accurately phrased "Do what I demand or no peace."

An attorney whose client has been indicted is almost expected to dismiss the significance of the action by citing the modern aphorism that "a district attorney could indict a ham sandwich." And the best evidence of that was the indictments in the 2006 Duke University lacrosse "scandal." There was more evidence against any random "ham sandwich" in that case than against the players who were indicted. The charges were eventually dropped and the local prosecutor disbarred—but not before damage had been done.

Today, even reasonable people point to the undeniable fact that an indictment could have been easily obtained in Ferguson. They argue that a trial would've allowed all evidence to be vetted by both sides.

No one who values credibility has claimed there was proof beyond a reasonable doubt before the grand jury that decided against indicting Wilson. Those who advocate for a trial claim that an indictment is "no big deal" because "probable cause," the standard for an indictment, is so low.

Anyone who thinks that a costly and terrifying trial for one's freedom and reputation is "no big deal," has not gone through that ordeal. Indicting Wilson to have a transparent and cleansing trial would have been unethical and impractical, if not counterproductive.

As a young Jewish federal prosecutor, I knew that indicting ham sandwiches was not kosher. I remember a case in which a federal agent agreed that we did not have proof beyond a reasonable doubt, but the agent wanted to indict the target to expose him and to make him suffer the agony of trial. I refused to seek an indictment because in our judicial system convicting a guilty man on insufficient evidence is a miscarriage of justice.

Those who still demand a trial should be careful what they wish for. The belief that airing the evidence in the Ferguson case at trial would cleanse the public of doubt and misinformation has no contact with reality. One need only look at how the grand jury evidence is being deconstructed to know that the unusual transparency of the grand jury's proceedings served only to exacerbate tensions—as well as give grist to TV talking heads who are worthy of an Olympic gold medal in synchronized spinning.

That does not mean trials should be unfairly blocked. It means that trials should not be unfairly generated because they would not be the cleansing vehicles many people expected them to be.

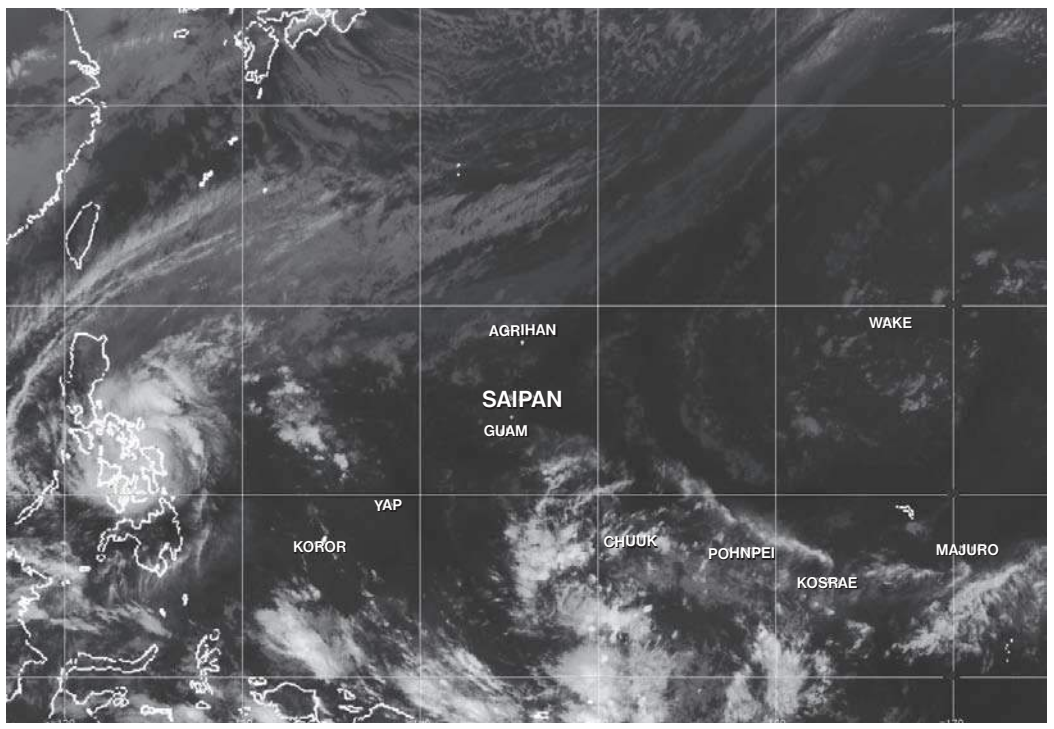
David Gould is a former federal prosecutor who served as chairman of the New York State Courts Ethics Commission (1989-1994). He is in private practice. He wrote this for Newsday.

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°	▲88° ▼77°

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2014
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A cold front stretches southwestward from near Minami Tori Shima at 24N154E to 19N145E near Agrihan in the Marianas to beyond 130E at 16N. Cloudiness and rain are found along and up to 250 miles northwest of this boundary. A surface trough enters the discussion area near 6N130E and extends to 3N136E to a circulation near 1N151E to 4N158E to end near EQ167E. Low-level convergence is producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms south of Palau between the equator and 5N from 131E to 137E and across Chuuk and Pohnpei states between the equator and 9N from 145E to 161E. A trade-wind disturbance pushing across the dateline is generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms east of Majuro between 3N and 8N from 177E to 180.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

Micronesia

Guam And Rota	Thundershowers	▲85	▼80
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼79
Yap	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼79
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼79
Pohnpei	Thunderstorms	▲85	▼77
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	▲84	▼80
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	▲85	▼81

Around the Globe

Auckland	Cloudy	▲72	▼59
Beijing	Sunny	▲38	▼19
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	▲71	▼59
Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	▲80	▼69
London	Sunny	▲42	▼33
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	▲71	▼54
Manila	Showers	▲82	▼75
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	▲74	▼54
Miami	Mostly Sunny	▲79	▼65
New York	Windy	▲40	▼31
Osaka	Sunny	▲54	▼35
Paris	Showers	▲43	▼32
Pusan	Partly Cloudy	▲46	▼31
Rome	Sunny	▲57	▼45
Salem	Showers	▲53	▼46
San Francisco	Showers	▲64	▼57
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲35	▼21
Tokyo	Ice	▲47	▼37
Washington, DC	Partly Cloudy	▲47	▼38

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Tides

Saipan Harbor

2:41 AM	Today	High Tide:	-0.4 Feet
9:40 AM	Today	Low Tide:	1.9 Feet
3:13 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.1 Feet
7:55 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:31 AM	5:46 PM
Tuesday	6:31 AM	5:47 PM
Wednesday	6:32 AM	5:47 PM
Thursday	6:33 AM	5:47 PM
Friday	6:33 AM	5:48 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	7:24 PM	7:40 AM
Tuesday	8:15 PM	8:30 AM
Wednesday	9:05 PM	9:16 AM
Thursday	9:54 PM	9:59 AM
Friday	10:42 PM	10:40 AM

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 12, 2014

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA5070	4:15am	5:05am	Daily
UA5068	8:00am	8:50am	3
UA5068	8:40am	9:30am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA5039	2:20pm	4:00pm	6, 7 via Rota
UA5078	3:10pm	4:00pm	1, 5
UA5038	3:10pm	4:00pm	2, 4
UA5040	6:55pm	7:45pm	1, 5
UA5078	8:35pm	9:25pm	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA5044	10:40pm	11:30pm	1, 5

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

UA5039	2:20pm	2:55pm	6, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM)

UA5039	3:25pm	4:00pm	6, 7

SAIPAN-PALAU (ROR)

DL287	6:05am	1:05am+1	2, 6 via NRT

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

DL287	6:05am	8:40am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6
DL297	4:20pm	7:05pm	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ606	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ606	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ604	3:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
7C 3401	4:30pm	8:20pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:10am	6:20am	4, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U8648	6:10am	8:40am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764A	1:30am	5:30am	4, 7
MU764	1:30am	5:30am	1, 5

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:30am	7:30am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ606/701	2:10am	11:15am	1 via ICN
OZ606/701	2:40am	11:15am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5069/PR111	2:45am	4:50pm	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5070/191	4:15am	7:20am	2, 7 via GUM
UA5070/191	4:15am	9:00am	3, 6 via GUM
UA5070/183	4:15am	8:45pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA5070/183	4:15am	9:10pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
DL287/473	6:05am	9:50pm	1, 2, 4, 5, 6 via NRT
UA5071/PR111	6:40am	4:50pm	3 via GUM
UA5071/PR111	7:15am	4:50pm	1, 5, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:00am	9:50pm	3 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:40am	9:30pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA5068/183	8:40am	9:50pm	1, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA5039/183	2:20pm	9:50pm	6, 7 via Rota-GUM
UA5038/183	3:10pm	9:30pm	2 via GUM
UA5078/183	3:10pm	9:30pm	5 via GUM
UA5078/183	3:10pm	9:50pm	1 via GUM
UA5038/183	3:10pm	9:50pm	4 via GUM
OZ604/703	3:20pm	11:50pm	Daily via ICN

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

OZ606/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ606/723	2:10am	12:50pm	1 via ICN
OZ606/721	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/723	2:40am	12:50pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UA5070/179	4:15am	10:35pm	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM
UA5068/179	8:00am	10:35pm	3 via GUM
UA5068/179	8:40am	10:35pm	1, 5, 6 via GUM
UA5039/179	2:20pm	10:35pm	6 via Rota-GUM
UA5078/179	3:10pm	10:35pm	1, 5 via GUM
OZ604/749	3:20pm	10:30pm	Daily via ICN

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA5069	2:45am	3:35am	Daily
UA5071	6:40am	7:30am	3
UA5071	7:15am	8:05am	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
UA5039	1:00pm	1:50pm	6, 7
UA5038	1:10pm	2:40pm	2, 4 via Rota
UA5077	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 5
UA5041	5:35pm	6:25pm	1, 5
UA5077	7:15pm	8:05pm	2, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA5043	9:20pm	10:10pm	1, 5

GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP)

UA5038	1:10pm	1:45pm	2, 4

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

UA5038	2:05pm	2:40pm	2, 4

PALAU (ROR)-SAIPAN

DL298	4:30am	3:00pm	3, 7 via NRT

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

DL298	10:25am	3:00pm	Daily
DL288	8:55pm	1:25am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ603	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
7C 3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ605	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ605	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	1:50am+1	3, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:30pm	5:50am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763A	4:30pm	12:30am+1	3, 6
MU763	4:30pm	12:30am+1	4, 7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:55pm	3:10am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ704/603	12:10am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
PR110/UA5041	7:35am	6:25pm	1,5 via GUM
PR110/UA5077	7:35am	8:05pm	3, 6, 7 via GUM
PR110/UA5043	7:35am	10:10pm	1, 5 via GUM
DL172/288	9:40am	1:25am+1	1, 3, 4, 5, 7 via NRT
UA190/5077	9:55am	8:05pm	2, 7 via GUM
UA190/5077	10:00am	8:05pm	3, 6 via GUM
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/605	12:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA184/5071	10:55pm	7:30am+1	3 via GUM
UA184/5071	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5039	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5038	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	4 via GUM-Rota
UA184/5077	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5041	10:55pm	6:25pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5077	10:55pm	8:05pm+1	3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
UA184/5043	10:55pm	10:10pm+1	1 via GUM
UA184/5071	10:59pm	8:05am+1	2, 5 via GUM
UA184/5038	10:59pm	2:40pm+1	2 via GUM-Rota
UA184/5077	10:59pm	2:40pm+1	5 via GUM
UA184/5041	10:59pm	6:25pm+1	5 via GUM
UA184/5077	10:59pm	8:05pm+1	2 via GUM
UA184/5043	10:59pm	10:10pm+1	5 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ746/603	12:30am	2:20pm	Daily via ICN
OZ750/603	1:10am	2:20pm	Daiily via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ724/605	2:20pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/605	1:15pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ724/605	2:20pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA180/5071	10:55pm	7:30am+1	3 via GUM
UA180/5071	10:55pm	8:05am+1	1, 5, 6 via GUM
UA180/5039	10:55pm	1:50pm+1	6 via GUM
UA180/5077	10:55pm	2:40pm+1	1, 5 via GUM-Rota
UA180/5041	10:55pm	6:25pm+1	1, 5 via GUM
UA180/5077	10:55pm	8:05pm+1	3, 6 via GUM
UA180/5043	10:55pm	10:10pm+1	1, 5 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; 7C: Jeju AirETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Mon, Tue,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
12:30NN	12:45NN	Daily
1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
12:00NN	12:15NN	Daily
1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO ROTA

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
7:45AM	8:15AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:00PM	4:30PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

ROTA TO SAIPAN

DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
8:30AM	9:00AM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat
4:45PM	5:15PM	Mon, Tues,Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat

JUST IN TIME FOR THE HOLIDAYS:

Mount Carmel's ' 'The Snow Queen' warms a sold-out crowd

By THOMAS MANGLONA II
CORRESPONDENT

Mount Carmel School's Theatre Club presented its musical adaption of Hans Christian Andersen's classic fairy tale, *The Snow Queen*, in a sold-out two-night show last week.

Featuring colorful costumes and sets and music from Disney's animated film *Frozen*, which the production was based on, the night marked the Catholic school's 36th production with over 15 years of stage and film under its belt.

Hundreds of community members crowded Saipan World Resort's Royal Taga Ballroom as darkness set the stage for a compelling play. Colorful lights gracefully illuminated the stage as characters performed their scenes, receiving a resounding applause from the audience.

Mount Carmel alumnus and former Theatre Club member Steven Johnson said he is always excited to see another production come out of the island's sole Catholic school. "I think the school has a lot of musical talent and it is cool to see more plays being produced," he told the *Saipan Tribune.*

Johnson recounted his days as a member of the club a few years ago. "Being in theatre was definitely one of the best parts of high school. Going to school and meeting with the club made it my second home. I'm glad to see the same happening to other students as the school puts on more shows."

Like Johnson, many other members of the community expressed their gratitude toward the school for providing the community with what some describe to be "the best productions ever."

Play director Jaqueline Doctor said she is proud to have worked with such an amazing cast and put on a big production in a short time span. Doctor, a sophomore, is one of the youngest students to have directed a school production.

"It was nerve-wracking and exciting at the same time. It was my first big play, so a lot of people expected a great show," she said.

In her message to the audience, the young director hopes the play will make them feel the love of a family. "From our theatre club family to yours," she added.

Fellow sophomore student Yumi Kim, who played the lead role of the Snow Queen Elsa, described her acting debut on stage as "unforgettable."

This is Kim's first year on Saipan, where she came to study English. Kim received a roaring applause from the audience after keeping herself in character throughout the production and flawlessly singing the play's signature song, *Let It Go*.

"I am glad and satisfied that the audience loved it. I knew we weren't perfect but glad we pulled it off together as a club and family," she said. "Through reading and memorizing my lines I learned a lot too, so I am glad."

PHOTOS BY THOMAS A. MANGLONA II

Yumi Kim, center, plays the role of Elsa with supporting cast members singing *Let It Go.*

Junior student Jonathan Pangelinan wishes he could play the role of the animated snowman "Olaf" one more time on stage.

"I am surprised at the amount of people that showed up and I'm very glad they enjoyed it because putting on a show like *Frozen* gives everyone high expectations. Overall, it seemed like a success," he said.

The antagonist of the storyline, Prince Hans, was played by Lance Deleon Guerrero, who considers his part in the production as the biggest role he's ever had.

"I loved *Frozen*, and even though it was challenging, it was a wonderful experience," he said. "I love being able to coordinate with so many friends of mine just to create something awesome."

School principal and producer Galvin Deleon Guerrero said that putting on a show like *The Snow Queen* takes a lot of hard work but it is an honor to work with kids who are not just talented but also committed to the performing arts.

"We've also been very blessed to have wonderful parents who not only support their kids but support the performing arts as well," he explained.

Last week's performance may have ended but the school theatre club family is already gearing up for another production next semester.

Guerrero described the club as a family, where kids of all grades from 1st grade through 12th grade work together to bring something magical to the stage and to the audience.

Mount Carmel School has a long legacy of bringing the performing arts to the community, dating back to the first Christmas program in 1952 and the first Passion play in 1953.

"The Theatre Club has been proud to continue that legacy for about the past two decades with shows that entertain, enlighten, and transform lives," he said.

Markel Toves, second from left, as Kristoff, and Elsa, played by Keona Camacho, second from right, tries to save Anna by bringing her to his trolls friends, Grand Pabbie, played by Noah Mesa, far right, and Bulda, played by Linsey Green, far left.

Jonathan Pangelinan, center, as Olaf leads supporting cast members in the musical number *Summer*.

Lance Deleon Guerrero, right, as Prince Hans, plots with the Duke of Weasleton, played by Kelvin Cepeda, on how to rule the Kingdom of Arendelle.

The cast and crew of Mount Carmel School's 36th production, *The Snow Queen.*

Christmas in the Marianas 2014

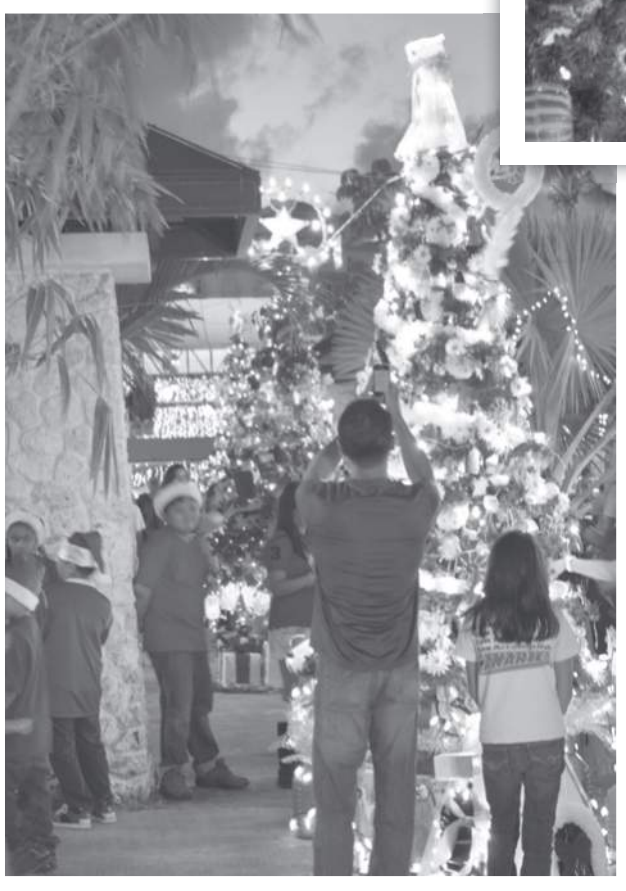
Northern Marianas International School literally "froze" people in their footsteps to take photos of the school's theme, the Disney animated movie *Frozen*.

The largest Christmas tree towers over the buildings along Paseo de Marianas, welcoming the holiday spirit to the tourist district.

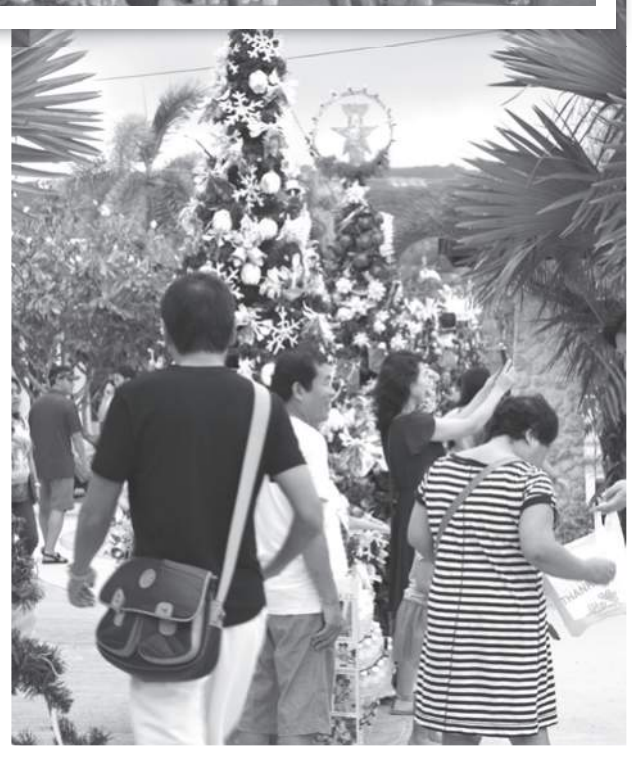
Tourists look at Christmas trees at the Paseo de Marianas before the lighting ceremony.

Families and their children enjoy the lighting of the dozens of small trees decorated by the CNMI's schools.

Judges score Rota and Tinian students' drawings for this year's Christmas drawing contest.



Community members take pictures of the Christmas trees after lighting.



Tourists enjoy having their photos taken with the Christmas trees at the Christmas in the Marianas event.

Saipan Awaodori Team members perform a traditional dance during the Christmas in the Marianas event.

Business

Job gains put US on pace for best growth since '99

WASHINGTON (AP)—A resurgence in U.S. hiring accelerated in November and put 2014 on track to be the healthiest year for job growth since 1999.

The gain of a robust 321,000 jobs—the most in nearly three years—put further distance between a strengthening American economy and struggling nations throughout the developed world.

The job market still isn't yet fully healthy. But its steady improvement raises the likelihood that the Federal Reserve will start raising interest rates from record lows by mid-2015.

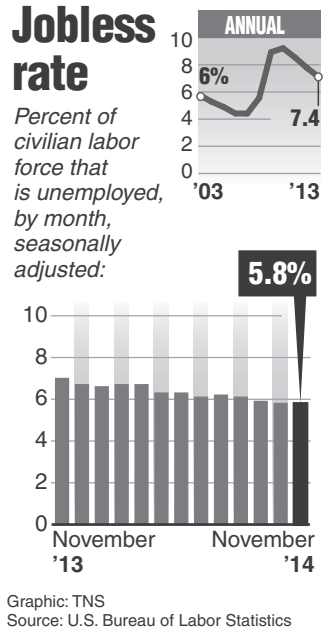
The unemployment rate remained at a six-year low of 5.8 percent, the Labor Department said Friday.

"These were boom-like numbers," said Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Analytics. "They indicate that the U.S. economy is on very solid ground."

Friday's report also raised hopes that Americans' pay might finally be starting to increase after barely budging since the Great Recession began seven years ago. The average hourly wage rose 9 cents to $24.66, the biggest gain in 17 months.

Fed Chair Janet Yellen has cited stagnant wages as a key reason to keep rates low. Higher wages could lead to higher prices, and the Fed might feel compelled to raise rates to limit inflation.

Still, over the past 12 months, hourly pay has risen just 2.1 percent, barely above the 1.7 percent inflation rate. And economists note that inflation remains below the Fed's 2 percent target and will likely stay tame because of lower energy prices. That might give the Fed some leeway to wait.



Graphic: TNS
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

The Fed has kept its benchmark rate near zero for six years to encourage borrowing and spending.

Investors welcomed Friday's news: The Dow Jones industrial average rose 58 points to close at 17,958. Earlier in the day, the Dow came within 9 points of crossing the 18,000 mark for the first time. The yield on the 10-year Treasury note rose to 2.31 percent, from 2.25 percent, a sign that investors foresee a Fed rate increase relatively soon.

So far this year, the economy has gained 2.65 million jobs. With a month to go, 2014 is already the best year for hiring in 15 years.

That is partly a reflection of the anemic pace of job growth for much of the recovery. Only this year, five years after the recession officially ended, have job gains neared levels historically associated with a strong economy. In the 1980s and 1990s, employers regularly added more than 3 million jobs a year.

Even now, signs of weakness remain: There are 6.9 million people with part-time jobs who would prefer full-time work—up from 4.1 million before the recession.

And millions have given up looking for work. That has been a factor in the declining unemployment rate: Once people stop seeking a job, they're no longer counted as unemployed.

A broader measure of unemployment, which includes involuntary part-time workers and people who given up looking, stands at 11.4 percent.

In addition, the number of unemployed people who have been out of work for more than six months is 2.8 million, more than double its pre-recession level.

How holiday shoppers are getting smarter

NEW YORK (AP)—Shoppers are getting smarter.

The start of the holiday shopping season shows a simple discount, even a big one, isn't always enough to lure people to buy. Shoppers can sniff out a legitimate deal from a fake one and are even leaving items in online shopping carts as reminders to look for a better bargain.

Shoppers with more knowledge and new patience may have contributed to the less-than-stellar turnout over Thanksgiving weekend, the traditional kickoff of holiday shopping.

Stores heavily discounted holiday merchandise days and even weeks before Black Friday. That gave shoppers plenty of opportunities to avoid the big lines.

That seemed to backfire over Thanksgiving weekend. The endless stream of sales pitches made many shoppers confident that heavy discounts would continue right on through Christmas.

That may be a self-fulfilling prophecy. The lukewarm start to the season means retailers will watch the next few weeks closely and could roll out more promotions than planned, says Dave Bassuk, managing director and co-head of the retail practice at AlixPartners.

"Retailers' greed hurt them, and the consumer is so much smarter," he said.

ShopperTrak, a Chicago-based consumer analytics company that tracks data at malls and stores but not online sites, said earlier this week that sales for the four-day weekend slipped 2.1 percent to $21.76 billion.

Cyber Monday deals are also being stretched out into "Cyber Week" and even earlier, crimping sales on the day itself. Sales rose 8.5 percent that day, the Monday after Thanksgiving, according to IBM Digital Analytics Benchmark. But that wasn't as strong as was expected.

The National Federation still projects sales will rise 4.1 percent for November and December, which accounts for on average 20 percent of the industry's total sales. But analysts expect a retail slugfest over winning those dollars.

Here are some of the ways people are shopping smarter:

DISCOUNTS AREN'T ENOUGH

Shoppers are addicted to deals, but it's taking more and more to get their attention.

Twenty percent off? Better throw in free shipping, too.

"They're acutely aware of all the elements of value," said the retail trade group's CEO Matt Shay.

Free shipping has been a top factor for online shoppers in deciding whether to buy. Ryan Urban, co-founder of Bounce Exchange, a technology company that works with more than 700 retailers' websites, says shoppers are converted to buyers at a rate 10 to 15 percent lower on websites that don't offer any free shipping.

Target Corp. is already attributing its sales surge online in part to its move to drop shipping fees for all online purchases until Dec 20. Thanksgiving saw a 40 percent surge in Target's online sales and was its biggest online sales day ever.

ON TARGET

Consumers got more purposeful over this holiday weekend.

According to C. Britt Beemer, chairman of America's Research Group, a consumer research firm, 75 percent who went shopping on Thanksgiving and Black Friday wanted only the so-called doorbusters, deeply discounted specials intended to lure in customers; last year, that figure was 49.9 percent.

Stores hope those items, sometimes priced so low the retailer loses money on them, will result in impulse spending once shoppers are in the door.

Trying to push more online sales also may be a factor in reducing impulse purchases.

Marshal Cohen, NPD's group's chief industry analyst, estimates 45 percent of store shopping is done on impulse, compared with 25 percent online.

Some retailers did say they saw shoppers throwing extra items in their carts—CEOs of both Toys R Us and Target noted it.

NO RUSH

Shoppers are not in a hurry to attack their holiday buying for many reasons.

NPD'S Cohen said that other than gadgets like Apple's iPhone 6 or specific toys like the Elsa doll tied to Disney's "Frozen" movie, there are no hot items that are hard to find. So shoppers know they can find better deals later in the season.

"There's no urgency to buy," said Cohen. "So consumers are in the driver's seat."

Increasing, shoppers are using website shopping carts to store items, not to immediately buy them, but as a reminder to shop around for betters deals, according to Bounce Exchange's Urban and others.

Paul Wolke, a 46-year-old photographer from Washington, N.J., started looking online a day before Thanksgiving. His wish list: accessories for a gym in his basement. He threw four items like hand weights and pull cables in his Amazon.com cart—but hasn't bought them.

"I'm using the Amazon cart almost as a shopping list with prices," he said.

AP

In this Monday, Oct. 6, 2014 photo, job seekers fill out forms before being interviewed during a job fair at Fontainebleau Miami Beach in Miami Beach, Fla.

Steve Jobs' video testimony transfixes courtroom

OAKLAND, California (AP)—More than three years after his death, legendary Apple Inc. CEO Steve Jobs held a federal courtroom transfixed on Friday as attorneys played a video of his testimony in a class-action lawsuit that accuses Apple of inflating prices by locking music lovers into using Apple's iPod players.

Looking gaunt and pale, Jobs spoke softly during the deposition he gave six months before his death in October 2011. But he gave a firm defense of Apple's software, which blocked music from services that competed with Apple's iTunes store.

"We were very scared" of the prospect that hackers could break Apple's security system, Jobs said, because that might jeopardize Apple's contracts with music recording companies that didn't want their songs to be pirated. "We would get nasty emails from the labels," he added.

The video wasn't released Friday following its viewing in court.

But Jobs didn't seem cowed by the record labels in an email, read by an attorney for the plaintiffs, in which the Apple CEO demanded that a record company executive publicly apologize for praising rival RealNetworks for producing software that would make songs from the RealNetworks store play on Apple's iPods.

Dressed in his trademark black turtleneck and blue jeans, Jobs appeared impatient at times and swiveled in his chair during the session, which was recorded at Apple's headquarters in Cupertino, California. He said he didn't remember why he was upset with the recording executive. But he acknowledged that he had proposed language for an Apple press release that condemned RealNetworks as a "hacker."

"We are stunned that Real has adopted the tactics and ethics of a hacker to break into the iPod, and we are investigating the implications of their actions" under federal law, the release said.

During testimony this week the plaintiffs also showed an email from Eddy Cue, who runs the iTunes business, saying music labels wanted Apple to let iPods play music from other sources—in order to encourage more music sales. However, Apple executives insisted the labels were even more vocal in pressing Apple to maintain security against unauthorized copying. The message about making devices more compatible "was in conflict with what they were telling me to do" about security, said Jeff Robbin, who oversaw iTunes engineering and helped create the iTunes software.

Apple used anti-piracy software that ensured only songs from its own iTunes store could be played on its iPod devices. Attorneys for a group of consumers and iPod resellers contend say that froze rival device-makers out of the market, allowing Apple to sell iPods at inflated prices. The plaintiffs are seeking $350 million in damages, which could be tripled if the jury agrees Apple violated antitrust rules.

Jurors saw the video on the fourth day of trial in a case that has been rocked by an unusual development. Apple attorneys late Thursday said neither of the women named as plaintiffs purchased iPods equipped with the restrictive software during the timeframe covered by the lawsuit, which is September 2006 to March 2009.

Nation

Police: Chokehold victim complicit in own death

NEW YORK (AP)—Eric Garner was overweight and in poor health. He was a nuisance to shop owners who complained about him selling untaxed cigarettes on the street. When police came to arrest him, he resisted. And if he could repeatedly say, "I can't breathe," it means he could breathe.

Rank-and-file New York City police officers and their supporters have been making such arguments even before a grand jury decided against charges in Garner's death, saying the possibility that he contributed to his own demise has been drowned out in the furor over race and law enforcement.

Officers say the outcry has left them feeling betrayed and demonized by everyone from the president and the mayor to throngs of protesters who scream at them on the street.

"Police officers feel like they are being thrown under the bus," said Patrick Lynch, president of the police union.

The grand jury this week cleared a white patrolman, Daniel Pantaleo, who was caught on video applying what appeared to be an illegal chokehold on the black man. Mayor Bill de Blasio said the case underscores the New York Police Department's need to improve relations with minorities.

But Lynch said: "What we did not hear is this: You cannot go out and break the law. What we did not hear is that you cannot resist arrest. That's a crime."

AP

Protesters rallying against a grand jury's decision not to indict the police officer involved in the death of Eric Garner stage a "die-in" at the Apple Store on Fifth Avenue, Friday, Dec. 5, 2014, in New York.

At the noisy demonstrations that have broken out over the past few days, protesters have confronted police who had nothing to do with the case. Signs read: "NYPD: Blood on your hands," "Racism kills" and "Hey officers, choke me or shoot me." Some demonstrators shouted, "NYPD pigs!" More than 280 people have been arrested, and more demonstrations were held Friday.

In private and on Internet chat rooms, officers say they feel demoralized, misunderstood and "all alone."

Some are advising each other that the best way to preserve their careers is to stop making arrests like that of Garner's, in defiance of the NYPD's campaign of cracking down on minor "quality of life" offenses as a way to discourage serious crime.

"Everyone is just demonizing the police," said Maki Haberfeld, a professor of police studies at John Jay College of criminal justice. "But police follow orders and laws. Nobody talks about the responsibility of the politicians to explain to the community why quality-of-life enforcement is necessary."

The fatal encounter occurred in July after Pantaleo and other police officers responded to complaints about Garner, a 43-year-old father of six.

The video showed Garner telling officers to leave him alone and refusing to be handcuffed. Pantaleo, an eight-year veteran, appeared to wrap his arm around Garner's neck and take him down to the ground with the help of other officers.

Garner could be heard saying, "I can't breathe," several times before he went motionless.

The medical examiner later found that a chokehold resulted in Garner's death, but also that asthma, obesity and cardiovascular disease were contributing factors.

While many have decried the death of another black man at the hands of a white officer, no evidence has come to light to suggest that Pantaleo's actions were racially motivated. His supervising sergeant at the scene was black, and so were some of the officers involved in the confrontation.

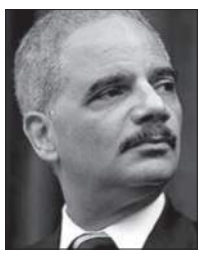
As the video sparked accusations of excessive force, the police unions mounted a counter-narrative: that Garner would still be alive if he had obeyed orders, that his poor health was the main cause of his death and that Pantaleo had used an authorized takedown move—more like a headlock than a chokehold—to subdue him.

While the grand jury proceedings were secret, Pantaleo's lawyer has said that the officer testified that he never tried to choke Garner and did not believe the man was in mortal danger.

Pantaleo's defenders have included Rep. Peter King, R-N.Y., who argued that the grand jury outcome would have been the same if Garner had been white and that police were right to ignore his pleas that he couldn't breathe.

Profiling rules exempt agents at airports, border

WASHINGTON (AP)—Federal agents who guard the border and screen passengers at airports would be exempt from new racial profiling guidelines that must be observed by the FBI and other law enforcement agencies. The Obama administration is to announce those guidelines in coming days, but officials say the changes would curtail numerous federal agencies from considering factors such as religion and national origin during investigations.



Holder

A U.S. official familiar with the guidelines said Friday night that the new rules banning racial profiling exempt the Transportation Security Administration and also do not cover inspections at ports of entry and interdictions at border crossings. The official was not authorized to discuss the guidelines by name and spoke on condition of anonymity ahead of a formal announcement expected soon.

The new guidelines apply to federal law enforcement agents but aren't binding on local police departments whose officers who are more likely to have day-to-day contact with community members. Their formulation also long predates the high-profile cases, such as the police shooting in August in Ferguson, Missouri, that have placed police treatment of minorities in the spotlight.

But the guidelines are nonetheless a significant legacy for outgoing Attorney General Eric Holder and come during a time of national reckoning about racial bias in law enforcement and community relations with police.

"This new guidance will codify our commitment to the very highest standards of fair and effective policing," Holder told an audience in Atlanta on Monday night in previewing the announcement.

Federal law enforcement agents are banned from routine racial profiling under a 2003 Bush administration policy that created a significant exemption for national security investigations. The new policy will go beyond the decade-old one, expanding the definition of racial profiling to ban the practice on the basis of characteristics including religion, national origin and sexual orientation, the official said.

The American Civil Liberties Union said the inclusion of those categories represented a "significant leap forward" in guarding against profiling.

But the guidelines will not end the FBI's ability to collect racial and ethnic information about neighborhoods, a practice known as "mapping" that has long disquieted civil liberties advocates, said Laura Murphy, director of the ACLU's Washington Legislative Office.

"In essence, the guidance is a major improvement, but it's not sufficient," she said.

The outlines of the guidelines were first reported by The Washington Post on Friday night.

The guidelines apply to law enforcement agencies within the Justice Department, including the FBI, the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, said the U.S. official. The official added that the Department of Homeland Security—which handles airport and border security, among other priorities—objected to being subject to the same rules.

Suspect in Fla. slaying of wife, 2 others arrested

BRADENTON, Fla. (AP)—Authorities have arrested a Florida man suspected of going on a killing spree, slaying his wife, a neighbor and then going to the church where his wife worked and killing the pastor, a sheriff's official said Saturday.

Andres "Andy" Avalos, 33, was taken into custody without incident at a mobile home park in the Bradenton area of Florida's Gulf Coast, the Manatee County Sheriff's Office said. Sheriff's spokesman Dave Bristow told The Associated Press in the email confirming the arrest that Avalos has been charged with murder and is being held without bond.

Authorities said Avalos is a suspect in a spree that began Thursday with the killings of his 33-year-old wife Amber Avalos, who was a Sunday school aide, and 45-year-old neighbor Denise Potter, at the Avaloses' home in Bradenton. Sheriff's officials said the suspect then went to Bayshore Baptist Church, where Amber Avalos worked, and fatally shot 31-year-old pastor James "Tripp" Battle.

The Bradenton Herald (http://bit.ly/1s6sd3Y) initially reported the arrest Saturday and said it occurred about two blocks from the church. Bristow did not immediately disclose any further information.

Church members had said the pastor's wife was at the church at time of the shooting, and she told police about the other two victims. It wasn't clear how she knew Amber Avalos and Denise Potter had been slain at the Avaloses' home in Bradenton about 10 miles from the church.

Sheriff's deputies said Avalos's vehicle was found abandoned Friday in a store parking lot near Bradenton, 45 miles south of Tampa on Florida's Gulf Coast.

Avalos has a criminal record, including DUI arrests, traffic offenses and a fight during which he was shot in the arm. Criminal records also show that he was arrested on a weapon possession charge but was not prosecuted.

The Avaloses have six children, ages 3 to 14. They were at school when officers found out about the shootings and the schools were put on lockdown for a time for fear that Avalos would attempt to pick them up. Deputies said the children were since put in the custody of a relative.

Bristow had no further information Saturday. He had said earlier in the week that investigators didn't know "exactly what transpired."

Asia

No major damage as Philippine storm weakens

AP
A man holds on to a pole as strong winds blow brought by Typhoon Hagupit in Legazpi, Albay province, eastern Philippines on Sunday, Dec. 7, 2014.

LEGAZPI, Philippines (AP)—Typhoon Hagupit knocked out power in entire coastal provinces, mowed down trees and sent more than 650,000 people into shelters before it weakened Sunday, sparing the central Philippines a repetition of unprecedented devastation by last year's storm.

Shallow floods, damaged shanties and ripped off store signs and tin roofs were a common sight across the region, but there were no confirmed deaths or major destruction after Hagupit slammed into Eastern Samar and other island provinces. It was packing maximum sustained winds of 140 kilometers (87 miles) per hour and gusts of 170 kph (106 mph), considerably weaker from its peak power but still a potentially deadly storm, according to forecasters.

The typhoon was moving slowly, which means more rainfall and a risk of landslides and flash floods.

Traumatized by Typhoon Haiyan's massive death and destruction last year in the central region that's being partly whipped by Hagupit (pronounced HA'-goo-pit), more than 650,000 people readily fled to about 1,000 emergency shelters and safer grounds. The government, backed by the 120,000-strong military, launched massive preparations to attain a zero-casualty target.

Rhea Estuna, a 29-year-old mother of one, fled to central Tacloban city's evacuation center as early as Thursday and waited in fear as Hagupit's wind and rains lashed the school, where she and her family sought refuge. When she peered outside Sunday, she said she saw a starkly different aftermath compared to the horror of Haiyan's aftermath.

"There were no bodies scattered on the road, no big mounds of debris," Estuna told The Associated Press by cellphone. "Thanks to God this typhoon wasn't as violent."

Haiyan's tsunami-like storm surges and killer winds left thousands of people dead and leveled entire villages, most of them in and around Tacloban.

Nearly a dozen countries led by the United States and the European Union have pledged to help in case of a catastrophe, disaster-response agency chief Alexander Pama said.

The EU commissioner for humanitarian aid, Christos Stylianides, said a team of experts would be deployed to help assess the damage and needed response.

"The Philippines are not alone as they brace up for a possible hardship," Stylianides said, adding the European Commission was "hoping that the impact will be less powerful than a year ago when Typhoon Haiyan left a devastating imprint on the country."

Authorities were verifying reports of some deaths but none has been confirmed so far, Pama told a news conference.

While officials expressed relief so far, they were quick to warn that Hagupit—Filipino for "smash" or "lash"—was still on course to barrel across three major central islands before starting to blow away Tuesday into the South China Sea.

Several typhoon-lashed eastern villages isolated by downed telephone and power lines were out of contact, Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman said.

"It's too early to tell," Philippine Red Cross Secretary-General Gwendolyn Pang said. "Let's cross our fingers that it will stay that way. It's too close to Christmas."

Army troops deployed to supermarkets and major roads in provinces in the typhoon's path to prevent looting and chaos and clear debris, all of which slowed the government's response last year.

Unlike in past years, many people readily left high-risk communities now, Soliman said.

"Haiyan was the best teacher of all," Soliman said. "People did not need much convincing to move to safety. In fact many of them volunteered to go."

Ex-czar's arrest makes China's Xi stronger

BEIJING (AP)—The criminal case against China's ex-security chief not only plays to public demands to curb corruption but spells the downfall of one of President Xi Jinping's biggest rivals, puts other challengers on their toes and leaves Xi more solidly in control than ever.

The fate of the once-feared Zhou Yongkang, 72, appeared to be sealed by the just-after-midnight announcements Saturday that he was expelled from China's ruling Communist Party and arrested in a criminal investigation into allegations ranging from bribe-taking to leaking state secrets.

"Many of Xi's enemies have been scared, and he's been successful in intimidating his enemies," said Willy Lam, an observer of China's elite politics at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. "All of them have become obedient—at least superficially—to Xi Jinping."

Zhou, with a face that looks like it is made of stone, was a former member of the party's all-powerful Politburo Standing Committee and was once in charge of the country's police, security forces and judiciary, a vast apparatus that spends more on domestic security than what China spent on the People's Liberation Army, the world's biggest military.

Zhou's status as security czar would have meant he had access to private phone conversations and secret information about national leaders. The state secrets allegations against him likely stem from his attempts to use leaks about colleagues to jockey for position ahead of China's handover of power in late 2012 to a new generation of leaders at the retirement of President Hu Jintao, Lam said.

If he ends up formally charged on that count, it also may give the court a reason to keep trial proceedings closed and thus limit any politically damaging public disclosures.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Quake collapses wall, kills sleeping boy in China

BEIJING (AP)—An earthquake struck southwest China, collapsing a wall of a house and killing a 9-year-old boy sleeping inside, state media reported. The official Xinhua News Agency said the quake hit a rural area of Yunnan province on Saturday evening, causing many people to rush out of buildings. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, the quake had a magnitude of 5.5. The Yunnan Seismological Bureau said in a statement Sunday that an additional 22 people were injured in the earthquake and another, slightly weaker, one in the area on Saturday.

NKorea denies Sony hack, calls it 'righteous deed'

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—North Korea released a statement Sunday that clearly relished a cyberattack on Sony Pictures, which is producing an upcoming film that depicts an assassination plot against Pyongyang's supreme leader. While denying responsibility for an attack last week that disrupted Sony's computer system and spewed confidential information onto the Internet, an unidentified spokesman for the North's powerful National Defense Commission acknowledged that it "might be a righteous deed of the supporters and sympathizers" of the North's call for the world to turn out in a "just struggle" against U.S. imperialism.

China slams Philippines over South China Sea case

BEIJING (AP)—China on Sunday again rejected an attempt by the Philippines to challenge its vast territorial claims over the South China Sea through international arbitration, a week before a deadline for Beijing to respond to the case. China prefers to settle its disputes in discussions with the countries directly involved. But the Philippines has filed a case with a tribunal operating under the U.N. Convention of the Law of the Sea, which provides a regulatory framework for the use of the world's seas and oceans. Xu Hong, director general of the Foreign Ministry's Department of Treaty and Law, said the Philippines was "obstinately pushing forward arbitration procedures" and urged it to negotiate with Beijing instead. He told reporters that China was committed to rejecting and not participating in the arbitration proceedings.

World

American, South African hostages killed in Yemen

SANAA, Yemen (AP)—An American photojournalist and a South African teacher were killed Saturday during a high-risk, U.S.-led raid to free them from al-Qaida militants in Yemen, a turbulent Arab country that is a centerpiece of U.S. counterterrorism efforts in the region.

The raid before dawn was the second rescue attempt in as many weeks to free Luke Somers, a 33-year-old freelance photographer and editor kidnapped just over a year ago in Yemen's capital.

South African Pierre Korkie, abducted 18 months ago with his wife in the city of Tazi, also was killed by militants as U.S. forces descended upon the militants' compound in southern Yemen. A South African aid group trying to negotiate Korkie's release said he was a day from freedom after a deal late last month that included a "facilitation fee" to the kidnappers. The relief organization had told Korkie's wife that "the wait is almost over."

President Barack Obama said he ordered the raid because Somers was believed to be in "imminent danger." The president, in a statement, condemned Somers' killing as a "barbaric murder," but did not mention the 56-year-old Korkie by name, offering condolences to the family of "a non-U.S. citizen hostage." The South African government said it was informed that Korkie died during the mission by American special forces.

"It is my highest responsibility to do everything possible to protect American citizens," Obama said. "As this and previous hostage rescue operations demonstrate, the United States will spare no effort to use all of its military, intelligence and diplomatic capabilities to bring Americans home safely, wherever they are located."

AP

In this Sunday, Jun. 30, 2013, Luke Somers, 33, an American photojournalist who was kidnapped over a year ago by al-Qaida speaks to a man during the National Dialogue Conference in Sanaa, Yemen.

About 40 American special operations forces were involved in the rescue attempt, which followed U.S. drone strikes in the area, U.S. officials said. The rescuers, backed by Yemeni ground forces, advanced within 100 meters (110 yards) of the compound in Shabwa province when they were spotted by the militants. A firefight ensued.

Amid the fighting, U.S. forces saw a militant briefly enter a building on the compound. U.S. officials believe it was then that Somers and Korkie were shot. When Americans entered the building, they found both men alive, but gravely wounded.

Officials said that based on the location where Somers and Korkie were being held, there was no possibility that they were struck by American gunfire.

U.S. forces pulled Somers and Korkie onto V-22 Ospreys, and medical teams began performing surgery in midair. One hostage died during the short flight; the second died after the Ospreys landed on the USS Makin Island, a Navy ship in the region.

The raid was over in about 30 minutes.

U.S. officials disclosed details of the mission on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to publicly discuss the raid.

Saturday's operation was the second rescue attempt by U.S. and Yemeni forces to bring Somers home alive. On Nov. 25, American special operations forces and Yemeni soldiers raided a remote al-Qaida safe haven in a desert region near the Saudi border.

Eight captives, including Yemenis, a Saudi and an Ethiopian, were freed. Somers was not at that location. He and five other hostages had been moved days earlier, officials later said.

Roughly a dozen people are believed held by al-Qaida militants in Yemen.

On Thursday, al-Qaida militants released a video showing Somers and threatening to kill him in three days if the United States did not meet the group's unspecified demands or if another rescue was attempted.

U.S. officials said that threat prompted Obama to move quickly. Using information obtained during the first raid, U.S. officials believed Somers was being held Shabwa province, a stronghold of al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, the terrorist group's Yemeni branch. Officials believed a second hostage was there, too, but did not know it was Korkie.

By Thursday evening, the Pentagon had sent the White House a proposed plan, which Obama approved the following day. Officials alerted Yemen's President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi, who gave his support.

Hadi has been a critical U.S. partner in seeking to undermine Yemen's dangerous al-Qaida affiliate. With the permission of Yemen's government, the U.S. has for years launched drone strikes against militant targets in the country and provided Yemen with hundreds of millions of dollars in security assistance. Civilian casualties from the drone strikes have stoked anger in the country, however.

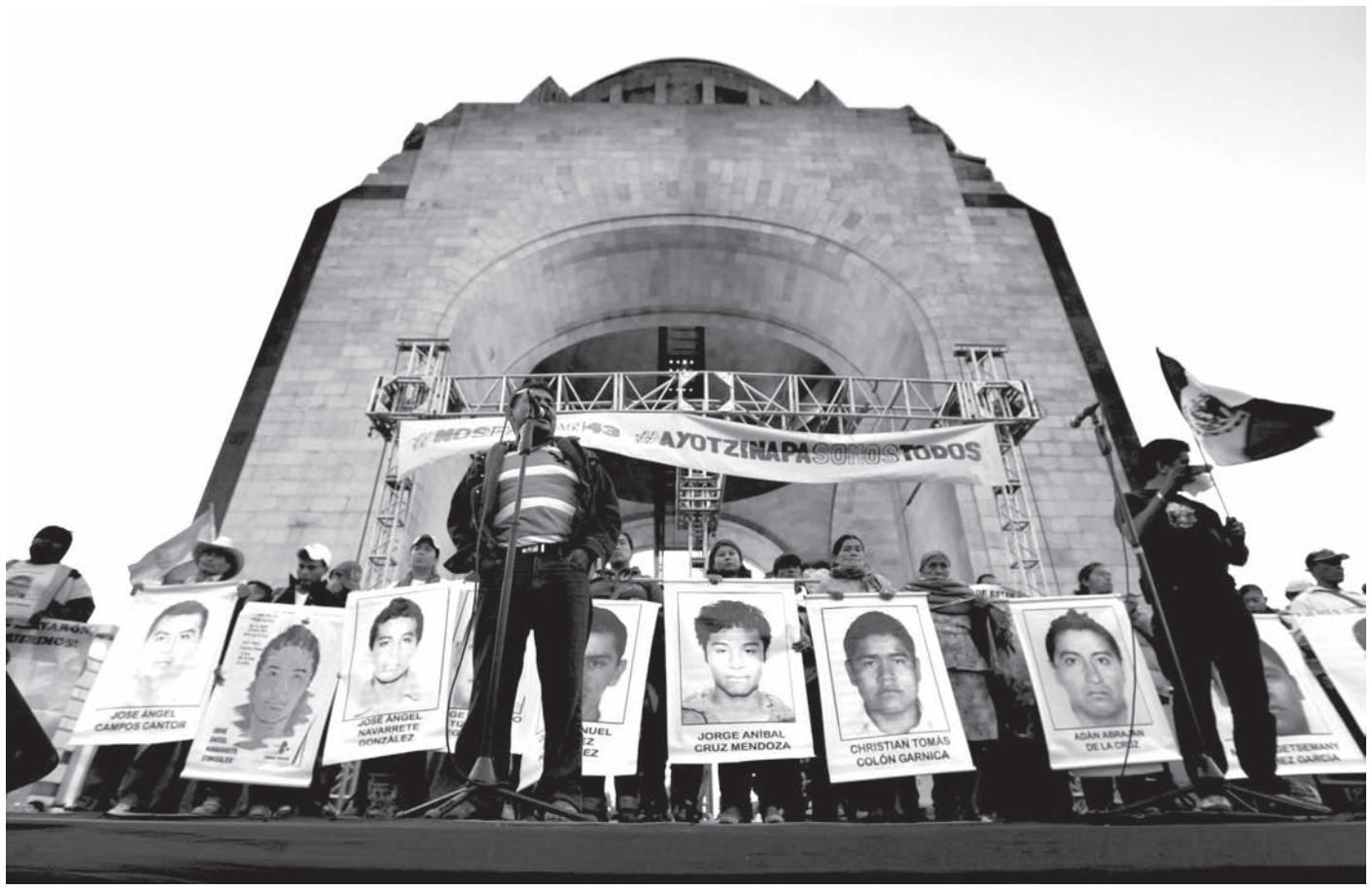
When Obama announced U.S. airstrikes this year against militant targets in Syria and Iraq, he held up the Yemen effort as a comparable model.

Yemen's highest security body, the Supreme Security Committee, issued a rare statement Saturday acknowledging that the country's forces had carried out the raid with "American friends." The committee said all the militants holding the hostages were killed in the operation.

No American forces were killed or sustained serious injuries in the raid. Yemen's government said four of its forces were wounded.

Korkie was abducted in May 2013 along with his wife, Yolande, who was doing relief work. She was released in January without ransom as a result of negotiations by the South African relief group, Gift of the Givers.

1st ID from remains in case of Mexico's missing 43



AP

Felipe de la Cruz, the father of one of the 43 missing students from the Isidro Burgos rural teachers college, speaks to a crowd in front of other relatives holding posters of their missing loved ones, during a protest at the Revolution Monument in Mexico City, Saturday, Dec. 6, 2014.

MEXICO CITY (AP)—More than two months after they disappeared, concrete evidence is beginning to emerge on the fate of 43 college students whose case has caused a political crisis in Mexico. At least one of them has been identified among charred remains found several weeks ago near a garbage dump, family and government officials say.

Though there was no official announcement Saturday, relatives and fellow students at the Rural Normal School in Ayotzinapa said experts had confirmed the identity of missing student Alexander Mora, a teenage farmer whose classmates called him "The Rock" for his determination.

"He was a classmate who was very strong, very persevering in whatever he had as a goal," said student leader Omar Garcia. "It's a big loss."

The families were given the information late Friday by an Argentine team of forensic experts working on behalf of the relatives and with the Attorney General's Office, relatives said. Mora's parents were surrounded by members of the school community in their hometown of El Pericon in an area of southern Guerrero state known as the Costa Chica.

Garcia said they received the news "with a lot of courage, valor, dignity and determination."

"When his father, Ezequiel, heard the news, the only thing he told us is that he wants justice," Garcia added.

The identification confirmed what Attorney General Jesus Murillo Karam told parents in November: that the students rounded up in a conflict with police had been killed and incinerated by a drug gang. The horrific story with no witnesses and barely a trace of the 43 young men led parents to discount the story, saying they would keep searching and expected to find their children alive.

Parents of the missing marched with thousands of people Saturday evening in a previously planned protest in Mexico City, descending from buses with sullen faces, most declining to speak to reporters.

"The parents will not rest until we have justice," said Felipe de la Cruz, father of one of the missing students.

Noting that the identification is for just one of the 43 disappeared, he said, "If they think one confirmation will leave us simply to mourn, they're wrong."

The students went missing Sept. 26 after confrontations with police in the Guerrero city of Iguala that killed three students and three bystanders. Murillo Karam has said they were attacked by police on orders of Iguala's then mayor, Jose Luis Abarca, who has since been detained after going into hiding. Authorities are holding more than 70 people in the case, which also forced the governor of Guerrero to resign.

US Airways jet lands in Rome after some feel ill

ROME (AP)—A US Airways flight bound for Philadelphia made an unscheduled landing in Rome after some aboard complained of feeling ill.

Officials at Rome's Leonardo da Vinci airport say two passengers and 11 crew members were examined at the airport's first aid station for throat and eye irritation complaints Saturday. All were cleared to resume their journey and left on other flights.

What caused the symptoms was unclear.

American Airlines spokeswoman Martha Thomas says the airline is investigating the source of a rubbery odor aboard the Airbus A330. She said several flight attendants had detected an unusual odor.

Flight 797 had left Tel Aviv late Friday night with 129 passengers.

American Airlines and US Airways merged last year.

Health & Fitness

Flu vaccine may be less effective this winter

NEW YORK (AP)—The flu vaccine may not be very effective this winter, according to U.S. health officials who worry this may lead to more serious illnesses and deaths.

Flu season has begun to ramp up, and officials say the vaccine does not protect well against the dominant strain seen most commonly so far this year. That strain tends to cause more deaths and hospitalizations, especially in the elderly.

"Though we cannot predict what will happen the rest of this flu season, it's possible we may have a season that's more severe than most," said Dr. Tom Frieden, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, at a news conference Thursday.

CDC officials think the vaccine should provide some protection and still are urging people to get vaccinated. But it probably won't be as good as if the vaccine strain was a match.

Flu vaccine effectiveness tends to vary from year to year. Last winter, flu vaccine was 50 to 55 percent effective overall, which experts consider relatively good.

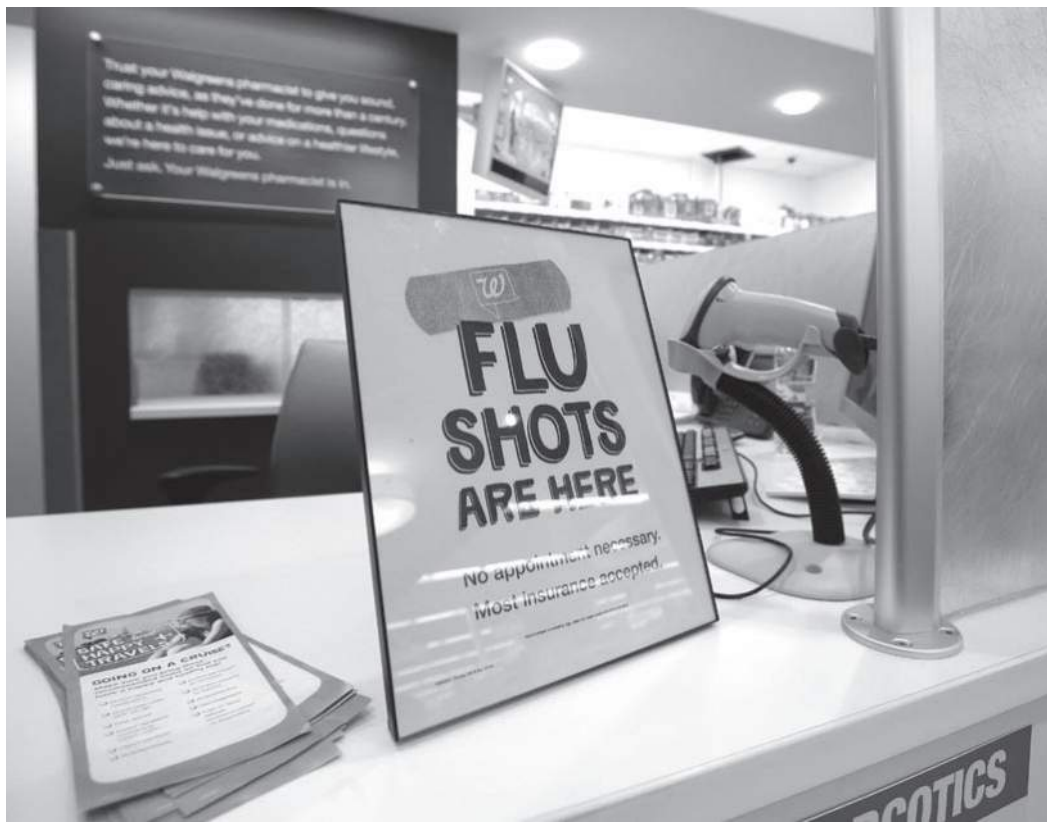
The CDC issued an advisory to doctors about the situation Wednesday evening.

CDC officials said doctors should be on the look-out for patients who may be at higher risk for flu complications, including children younger than 2, adults 65 and older, and people with asthma, heart disease, weakened immune systems or certain other chronic conditions.

Such patients should be seen promptly, and perhaps treated immediately with antiviral medications, the CDC advised. If a patient is very sick or at high risk, a doctor shouldn't wait for a positive flu test result to prescribe the drugs—especially this year, CDC officials said.

The medicines are most effective if taken within two days of the onset of symptoms. They won't immediately cure the illness, but can lessen its severity and shorten suffering by about a day, Frieden said.

He was echoed by Dr. Richard Zimmerman, a University of Pittsburgh flu vaccine researcher. Some doctors may hesitate, reasoning that flu season usually doesn't hit hard until around February. But it appears to have arrived in many parts of the country already and "it's time to use them," Zimmerman said.



AP
In this Sept. 16, 2014 file photo, a sign lets customers know they can get a flu shot in a Walgreen store in Indianapolis.

Among infectious diseases, flu is considered one of the nation's leading killers. On average, about 24,000 Americans die each flu season, according to the CDC.

Nearly 150 million doses of flu vaccine have been distributed for this winter's flu season.

Current flu vaccines are built to protect against three or four different kinds of flu virus, depending on the product. The ingredients are selected very early in the year, based on predictions of what strains will circulate the following winter.

The ingredients always include a Type A H3N2 flu virus. The most severe flu seasons tend to be dominated by some version of that kind of flu bug. The three most deadly flu seasons of the last 10 years—in the winters of 2003-2004, 2007-2008, and 2012-2013—were H3N2 seasons.

In March, after the H3N2 vaccine strain was vaccine production was underway, health officials noted the appearance new and different strain of H3N2. "This is not something that's been around before," Frieden said.

But health officials weren't sure if the new strain would become a significant problem in the United States this winter until recently, they said. Lab specimens from patients have shown that the most commonly seen flu bug so far is the new strain of H3N2. Specifically, about 48 percent of the H3N2 samples seen so far were well matched to what's in the vaccine, but 52 percent were not, the CDC said.

Fasting 15 hours a day wards off obesity in mice, study says

By MELISSA HEALY
LOS ANGELES TIMES

If obesity is linked to Americans' 24/7 lifestyles, would it help to reset the clock that dictates our eating? A new study suggests it would, and in ways that go well beyond weight alone.

Even with a diet high in fat and sugar, mice that had their "eating day" compressed into eight to nine hours and then fasted for the remainder of the day were less likely to become obese, says new research. Mice that observed a lengthy daily fast also suffered less systemic inflammation, fatty liver disease, worrisome cholesterol and metabolic disturbance than did mice that ate whenever they pleased.

The difference wasn't how much or what the mice ate: Mice kept on a daily fasting regimen ate the same fattening chow, and just as much of it, as did those who ate around the clock. The only difference was when they ate it—and how long they did without.

The study, published this week in Cell Metabolism, builds on the idea that our cells adhere to a sleep-wake cycle and process fuel differently at different times of the day.

Researchers at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in the San Diego-area community of La Jolla subjected 392 male lab mice to a variety of feeding patterns and gauged the effects on a wide range of metabolic and physiological measures.

Compared with mice allowed to eat whenever they wanted, those who did all of their eating in nine hours a day gained only half as much weight, even though both groups consumed about the same number of calories.

The daily fasters also showed exercise endurance far superior to that of mice with no eating restrictions. They not only outran the chubby all-day eaters, they also left mice reared on normal, healthy chow in the dust.

A long daily fast also aided in weight loss among mice that were obese. Those switched from the eat-when-you-want mode to a 15-hour daily fast mode lost 5 percent to 12 percent of their body weight over three months, while the mice who continued to eat throughout the day saw their weight rise an additional 10 percent to 25 percent.

And mice that reaped the rewards of fasting could make an occasional dietary detour and still stay healthy.

24 go blind after cataract surgery in India

NEW DELHI (AP)—Authorities ordered an investigation Friday after at least 24 poor and elderly people went blind following cataract surgeries performed at a free medical camp run by a charity in northern India.

The operations were performed in early November on 130 patients who were all older than 50 and living in either Amritsar or nearby Gurdaspur, in Punjab state, said Abhinav Trikha, a top official in Gurdaspur.

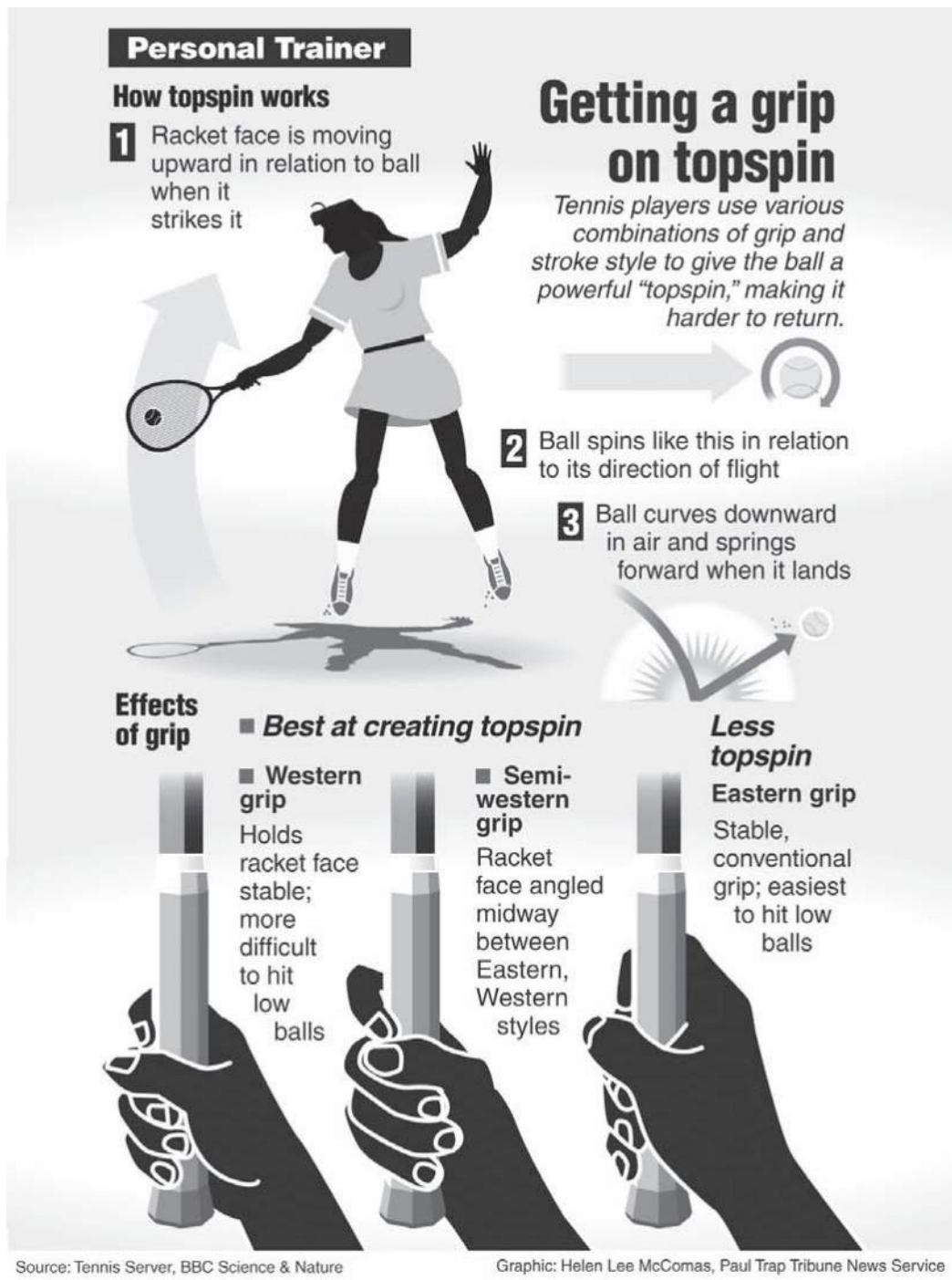
Some of the patients reported this week that they'd lost their eyesight or were suffering infections, top Amritsar official Ravi Bhagat said.

Doctors in Amritsar were treating some of the patients on Friday, but said it was unlikely any would regain their sight. Police have launched an investigation, and detained at least one doctor in Gurdaspur.

Every year, thousands of people, especially in rural areas without proper health facilities, undergo cataract operations in medical camps held by health authorities and welfare groups.

The case once again highlighted the perilous state of health care in India, where hundreds of millions of poor people without access to doctors or health insurance are forced to seek treatment at medical camps because of poor services and corruption at government hospitals.

Last month, 13 women died after allegedly taking tainted drugs after undergoing simple sterilization surgeries in the central state of Chhattisgarh.


Personal Trainer
How topspin works
1 Racket face is moving upward in relation to ball when it strikes it
2 Ball spins like this in relation to its direction of flight
3 Ball curves downward in air and springs forward when it lands
Getting a grip on topspin
Tennis players use various combinations of grip and stroke style to give the ball a powerful "topspin," making it harder to return.
Effects of grip
Best at creating topspin
Western grip
Holds racket face stable; more difficult to hit low balls
Semi-western grip
Racket face angled midway between Eastern, Western styles
Less topspin
Eastern grip
Stable, conventional grip; easiest to hit low balls

Source: Tennis Server, BBC Science & Nature
Graphic: Helen Lee McComas, Paul Trap Tribune News Service

Life & Style

Beyonce, Pharrell, Sam Smith lead in Grammy nods

NEW YORK (AP)—The year's brightest newcomer, Sam Smith; the most nominated female in Grammyh history, Beyonce; and mega-producer Pharrell led the Grammy Award nominations, with six nominations apiece.

Smith's "In the Lonely Hour," Beyonce's surprise self-titled release and Pharrell's "G I R L" will compete for the coveted album of the year, along with Beck's "Morning Phase" and Ed Sheeran's "X," the most streamed album on Spotify this year.

The Recording Academy announced its nominees for the 57th annual show throughout the day on Friday.

Pharrell earned a whopping three nominations for the top prize thanks to his production work on Beyonce and Sheeran's albums, which means the hit-maker only has a chance to walk away with four awards when the Grammys are presented on Feb. 8.

Smith is up for key honors such as best new artist and song and record of the year for his hit "Stay With Me." He performed at KIIS FM's annual Jingle Ball on Friday night at the Staples Center in Los Angeles following the nominations, calling it "unbelievable."

"The Grammys is, when they say something—that your song is good or your album is good—it means that they're saying that your album is a timeless piece of work, which I'm trying to do, and what I tried to do with my record. And to be in that category is amazing," Smith said in an interview with The Associated Press.

AP

In this Dec. 2, 2014 file photo, Taylor Swift performs at the Victoria's Secret fashion show in London. Sam Smith will battle the ladies at the Grammys: "Stay With Me" is nominated for record of the year against hits like "Fancy," "Shake It Off" and "All About That Bass." Sia's "Chandelier" is also up for record of the year, one of the four top awards, and will compete with Taylor Swift, Iggy Azalea, Meghan Trainor and Smith. Pharrell and Ed Sheeran announced the nominees in four categories Friday, Dec. 5, 2014.

"I can't—to see my name next to Beyonce's is just very weird for me."

Beyonce, surprisingly, was not up for song or record of the year. Her nominations include best urban contemporary album as well as R&B song and R&B performance for "Drunk in Love" featuring Jay Z.

For song and record of the year, Smith's "Stay With Me" will battle Taylor Swift's "Shake It Off," Sia's "Chandelier" and Meghan Trainor's "All About That Bass," the viral hit that launched the buzzed songwriter's own singing career.

"I want to cry again. I keep tearing up all day," Trainor said when thinking of herself as a "Grammy-nominated" singer in an interview. "It's crazy. It's amazing,"

Iggy Azalea's "Fancy" is nominated for record of the year, while Hozier's "Take Me to Church" is up for song of the year, a songwriter's award.

Azalea, the Australian newcomer, earned four nominations, including best rap album for "The New Classic," best pop duo/group performance for "Fancy" with Charli XCX and best new artist, pitting her and Smith against pop-rock trio HAIM, English band Bastille and country singer Brandy Clark.

Sia, who is also Australian and earned four nominations, had a breakthrough this year with "Chandelier" after writing songs for other singers, from Rihanna to Beyonce to Katy Perry.

Beck, Jack White, Usher, Drake, Jay Z, composer Gordon Goodwin and mastering engineer Tom Coyne also earned four nominations each. Eric Church and Miranda Lambert, both nominated in all four country categories, will compete for best country album, along with Clark, Dierks Bentley and Lee Ann Womack.

Swift, who earned three nominations, called 2014 the best year of her life. The singer, whose album "1989" will be eligible for awards at the next Grammys, turns 25 next week.

"It's kind of like an amazing thing you guys have done for me over the past year because as a nice early birthday present this song today just got nominated for three Grammys," she said onstage before performing "Shake It Off" at Jingle Ball.

Other Grammy nominees, from Azalea to Pharrell to Sheeran also performed at the concert Friday night.

Los Angeles police investigating Cosby abuse claim

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Los Angeles police opened an investigation into a woman's claims that Bill Cosby molested her when she was 15 years old, a department spokeswoman said.

The investigation was opened Friday after Judy Huth, who is suing Cosby for sexual battery, met with detectives for 90 minutes, Officer Jane Kim said.

Huth's civil suit claims Cosby forced her to perform a sex act on him in a bedroom of the Playboy Mansion around 1974 when she was underage.

Attorney Gloria Allred said Huth met with two special victim unit detectives Friday, three days after her lawsuit was filed.

"We are going to provide any and all evidence that she has," Allred said.

Huth did not take questions during a news conference.

Police did not give any additional details about the investigation. Police Chief Charlie Beck on Thursday urged potential victims of sex abuse by Cosby to speak with detectives, regardless of whether their claims were outside the statute of limitations.

Allred refused to comment on Huth's lawsuit, which was filed by a different law firm. Cosby's attorney, Martin Singer, accused Huth and another lawyer of extortion and said she attempted to sell her story to a tabloid a decade earlier.

Singer's filing states the other attorney, Marc Strecker, first demanded $100,000 for Huth to remain silent, then raised the demand to $250,000 as more women came forward accusing Cosby of sexual misconduct.

Cosby has been accused by more than 15 women in recent weeks of sexual misconduct, ranging from groping to drugging and raping. He has never been charged with a crime, and his attorneys have denied many of the allegations.

Crews on Friday were forced to clean up Cosby's star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame after someone wrote "Rapist" on it three times.

"When people are unhappy with one of our honorees, we would hope that they would project their anger in more positive ways then to vandalize a California state landmark," the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, which manages the stars embedded in several sidewalks, said in a statement.

Cosby received his star in 1977. It's placed near the busy intersection of Hollywood Boulevard and North Highland Avenue.

Also Friday, a woman who said Cosby drugged and sexually assaulted her in 1979 told her story in interviews with CNN and The Associated Press and said she wanted to help stop the comedian from abusing others.

P.J. Masten said in an interview with CNN that she woke up naked and bruised in a bed with Cosby in Chicago after he gave her an alcoholic drink and that she believes she was raped.

She said she knew Cosby from working at Playboy clubs in New Jersey, Los Angeles and Chicago. She said she was instructed at the time not to report the assault because Cosby was Hugh Hefner's "best friend," but she decided this week to come forward with her allegations after a woman sued Cosby, alleging that he forced her to perform a sex act at the Playboy Mansion when she was 15.

"I just want him exposed for the serial druggie rapist that he is. He's got to be stopped," Masten said. "I don't care if he's 77 years old. He's got to be stopped."

Cosby accuser also testified against Marv Albert

TRENTON, N.J. (AP)—A woman who said Friday that Bill Cosby had drugged her and sexually assaulted her in 1979 also accused another famous man of attempted sexual assault: sportscaster Marv Albert, who pleaded guilty to assault and battery the day after her surprise testimony against him.

P.J. Masten said in an interview with CNN that she woke up naked and bruised in a bed with Cosby in Chicago after he gave her an alcoholic drink and that she believes she was raped. She discussed the details of her allegations against Cosby in an interview with The Associated Press.

Cosby's attorney, Martin Singer, did not immediately return calls and emails requesting comment. Singer has denied some of the recent allegations, while another Cosby attorney has called others "discredited."

Masten was a surprise witness against Albert in his 1997 trial, testifying that he bit her and tried to force her to perform oral sex in a Dallas hotel room in 1994 while he was wearing women's panties and a garter. Masten said she escaped by pulling off Albert's toupee.

Albert was originally charged with assault and sodomy after a longtime lover claimed that he bit and attacked her in a hotel room. He pleaded guilty to the lesser charges.

Albert maintained after the trial that Masten's accusations were a "complete fabrication." He said in a November 1997 interview with Barbara Walters on ABC's "20/20" that he had a hair stylist ready to testify that he was wearing a hair weave that would not have come off.

He said in the TV interview that he did not have a sexual relationship with Masten, who was then a VIP representative for the Hyatt hotel chain.

Representatives for Albert and CNN didn't immediately respond to requests for comment Friday.

Masten, 64, of Lyndhurst, New Jersey, described herself Friday as the "blond, bombshell ambush witness" against Albert. She said she didn't want to talk about that case.

"I really don't want to go into that because it's not about him," she said.

She said she knew Cosby from working at Playboy clubs in New Jersey, Los Angeles and Chicago. She said she was instructed at the time not to report the assault because Cosby was Hugh Hefner's "best friend," but she decided this week to come forward with her allegations after a woman sued Cosby, alleging that he forced her to perform a sex act at the Playboy Mansion when she was 15.

Packed agenda for Prince William, Kate in NYC, DC

NEW YORK (AP)—Among the roughly 5 million visitors expected in New York this holiday season, at least two are certain to get the royal treatment: Britain's Prince William and his wife, Kate. They are due to arrive Sunday for the first trip either has made to the United States' biggest city, and William also is set to visit the nation's capital for the first time. A few things to know:

Properly known as the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, the royals are making their first official visit to the United States since a 2011 jaunt to California. (William made a personal trip to a friend's Memphis, Tennessee, wedding this May with his brother, Prince Harry.)

The duke and duchess have been looking forward to a three-day trip involving issues "close to both of their hearts," a spokeswoman said.

Kate is expecting their second child in April, but the royals' schedule is packed with plans ranging from paying respects at the National Sept. 11 Memorial and Museum to taking in a Cleveland Cavaliers-Brooklyn Nets game.

Other events promote British involvement in New York's technology and creative sectors and spotlight the couple's charitable interests in wildlife conservation and child development.

Among other commitments, William is set to meet with President Barack Obama at the White House on Monday while the duke is in Washington to attend a World Bank conference, where he's speaking about fighting illegal trade in wildlife parks. Meanwhile, Kate will tour a New York child development center with the city's first lady, Chirlane McCray. Former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and daughter Chelsea Clinton are accompanying both royals to a New York reception highlighting conservation efforts.

William and Kate also are due to join Tom Hanks, opera singer Renee Fleming and others at a black-tie, up-to-$10,000-per-seat scholarship fundraiser for the University of St. Andrews, the Scottish institution where the royal couple met and earned degrees.

As an itinerary, "it's trying to cover a lot of points in a short period of time," but it signals the couple's interest in forging ties with Americans who share their philanthropic ideas, says Joe Little, the managing editor of Majesty magazine.

Spain's Queen Letizia toured a public school just in September. Among British royals, Queen Elizabeth II visited in 2010, and Prince Harry hit both New York and Washington last year. The queen's daughter, Princess Anne, opened an exhibition of the Magna Carta in Washington last month.

But William and Kate's watched-round-the-world wedding and parenthood have made them particular magnets for public attention, as a 21st-century royal family in which an heir to the throne drives his newborn home from the hospital himself.

New York Mayor Bill de Blasio rose to political prominence pledging to champion the middle class—a point underscored when he took his victory-party stage last year to "Royals," pop star Lorde's hit that declares "we'll never be royals ... That kind of luxe just ain't for us." But de Blasio has praised William and Kate's visit, noting their charitable work and saying he'd like to "see how we can work together."

The duke and duchess will take commercial flights and stay in a New York hotel, which their spokespeople wouldn't name.

Their retinue includes two private secretaries, two media aides, an adviser, a personal assistant and a privately paid hairdresser for Kate. The British government's Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Royal Foundation—the couple's and Harry's charity—and St. Andrews are splitting other trip costs.

The couple's 17-month-old son, Prince George, isn't making the trip.

Acute morning sickness sidelined Kate for a couple of months earlier this year, but she returned to her royal duties with gusto in late October.

AP

Britain's Prince William, Duke of Cambridge, right, his wife Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge, react on the balcony of Buckingham Palace after returning from the Trooping the Colour ceremony to mark the Queen's official birthday in London, in this, June 11, 2011 file photo.

Marilyn Monroe's lost love letters sold for $121K

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)—Joe DiMaggio's love letter to Marilyn Monroe has sold for $78,125 at a Beverly Hills auction.

Julien's Auctions in Beverly Hills says the letter, written by the baseball great after Monroe announced she was divorcing him, was sold Saturday to an undisclosed buyer.

The letter during their brief, volatile marriage was among 300 items, dubbed "Marilyn Monroe's Lost Archives," that went on the block.

A handwritten letter from Monroe to her third and final husband, playwright Arthur Miller, sold for $43,750.

Monroe, who died of a drug overdose at age 36 in 1962, willed the collection of letters to her mentor, the legendary acting coach Lee Strasberg.

'Karate Kid' honored for Los Angeles ties

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Los Angeles has honored an underdog that became a top dog: "The Karate Kid."

The movie, which was filmed in LA's San Fernando Valley, was honored Friday to mark the 30th anniversary of its release.

Director John Avildsen and some cast members received a resolution from Councilman Mitchell Englander during a City Council meeting in Van Nuys.

Englander says the film had a limited budget and no big-name stars when it came out in June 1984 but has become an instant classic.

The film starred Ralph Macchio as a picked-on teenager who learns about life and karate from a wise mentor.

Scenes were filmed at the Chatsworth Nature Preserve and at Cal State Northridge.

Macchio didn't attend the ceremony and Pat Morita, who played his mentor, died in 2005.

New Las Vegas tourism ad features Imagine Dragons

LAS VEGAS (AP)—The latest 'What Happens Here, Stays Here' Las Vegas ad campaign features a familiar musical act from, well, right here.

Indie-rock band Imagine Dragons has teamed up with the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority for the latest ad from the firm R&R Partners.

One is selling a destination.

The other is selling a forthcoming as-yet-unnamed album.

The creative crew for R&R tasked with keeping the ad campaign fresh, had their idea: two ads, one with a man, the other a woman, who both crisscross through Las Vegas scenes running into each other pool-side, or amid a fire-breathing variety act, at a 1920s-themed nightclub and a concert venue.

Then, about two months ago, the hometown band Imagine Dragons came along with their newest single, "I bet my life."

The quickly conceived commercials that debut Monday were shot on location at the SLS Las Vegas and MGM Grand casino-hotels. They cost $1.2 million to produce and will cost the Las Vegas tourism agency an additional $7.6 million to buy national air time on NBC, ABC, FOX, E!, Bravo, Food Network, USA, Travel Channel, Comedy Central and several other channels.

"We're in debt to Vegas," said Dan Reynolds, the band's lead singer and a Las Vegas native, in interviews filmed by R&R. "We really owe everything to Vegas."

Imagine Dragons sold more than 3.9 million copies of its 2012 debut album "Night Visions" which included the Grammy-winning single "Radioactive."

Rob Dondero with R&R Partners, who leads the team that sells Las Vegas to the world, said the spots' messages are simple.

"Las Vegas is a place where anything can happen," he said.

Wife of deaf husband seeks to cope in new surroundings

DEAR ABBY: My husband, "Norm," has become profoundly deaf. He has a cochlear implant in one ear and a hearing aid in the other; neither has helped much. He has extreme difficulty with speech recognition. We can talk together in the quiet of our home as long as I sit right next to him and speak slowly. We use assisted-listening devices to communicate with each other in the car or at a restaurant.

Norm's hearing loss has affected us as a couple. We no longer have a social life. When Norm and I are out together, we become "invisible" to other couples. It's just too much work for anyone to communicate with us.

We are about to move to a retirement community where one meal a day is included in the dining room. I'm worried about how we will navigate the social aspects of eating with others, who will rapidly decide they don't want to eat with us again because of the difficulty of trying to chat with Norm.

Norm is well aware of this problem. He has proposed that he eat alone in our apartment while I go to the dining room and meet people, unencumbered by his impairment. Can you advise?

TRAPPED IN A SITUATION

DEAR TRAPPED: Before moving into the retirement community, make a point of discussing your husband's severe hearing impairment with the director, the nurse and/or their medical adviser because they need to be made aware of your husband's special needs in order to be able to accommodate him, if it's possible.

According to the House Clinic in Los Angeles (www.houseearclinic.com), he will probably be advised to check in with his otologist (a doctor who specializes in the anatomy and physiology of the ear) to see if anything further can be done to improve his hearing. I hope you will follow through with that suggestion, because advances are being made in this field every year, and it may help your husband be less isolated.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: What is the rule of etiquette in sending out and signing Christmas cards from my family when one child is over 20 and in college? Do I send cards from just my husband, me, and the kids still living at home? Or should I also include my son, the one away at college?

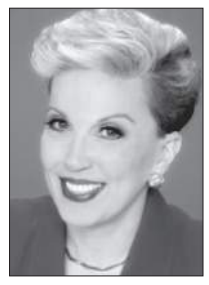
REALLY CONFUSED IN TEXAS

DEAR REALLY CONFUSED: Even if your son is away at college, he is still a part of your family, so include him. Once he has finished with school and is out on his own, that would be the time to suggest he start sending his own greetings.

■■■

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

DEAR ABBY: My son took his own life last year. I am raising his small children because their mother is out of the picture. How do I tell them how their daddy died?

GRANDMA IN THE MIDWEST

DEAR GRANDMA: Tell them gradually when they start asking questions. If they ask why Daddy died, say he was very ill. When they want to know what the illness was, tell them he suffered from depression. When they want more details, reveal them in an age-appropriate manner.

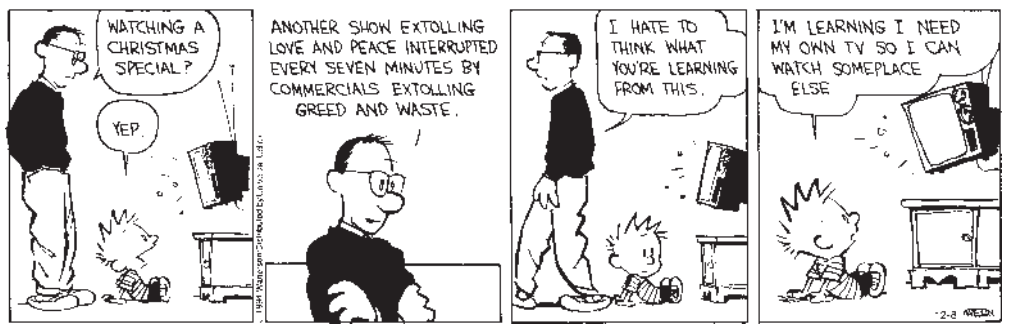
■■■

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


WATCHING A CHRISTMAS SPECIAL?
YEP.
ANOTHER SHOW EXTOLLING LOVE AND PEACE INTERRUPTED EVERY SEVEN MINUTES BY COMMERCIALS EXTOLLING GREED AND WASTE.
I HATE TO THINK WHAT YOU'RE LEARNING FROM THIS.
I'M LEARNING I NEED MY OWN TV SO I CAN WATCH SOMEPLACE ELSE

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

SANTA CLAUS KNOWS WHETHER YOU'VE BEEN GOOD OR BAD
HE'S A FAT GUY WHO DOES NOTHING 364 DAYS OUT OF THE YEAR
YOU HAVEN'T BEEN VERY GOOD
WHO IS HE TO JUDGE ME?!
JIM DAVIS 12-8

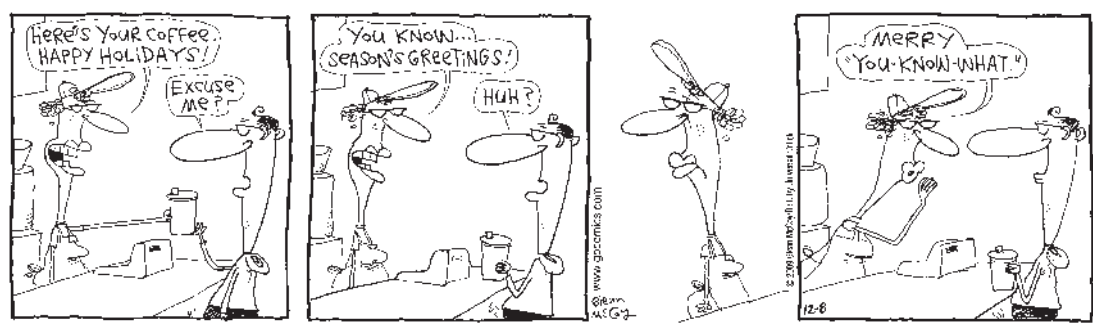
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

WOW. CHRISTMAS IS COMING UP FAST.
REALLY? I FEEL LIKE IT'LL NEVER GET HERE.
THERE'S SO MUCH I HAVE TO DO.
LIKE WHAT?
I HAVE TO START MY PRE-CHRISTMAS BEHAVING.
OHMIGOSH. I ALMOST FORGOT!

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Cinderella's horses
5 "— Kapital"
8 Venomous snakes
12 Composer Khachaturian
13 Wall climber
14 Mormon state
15 Apparel
16 Spanish lass
18 Not alfresco
20 Decreased in warmth
21 Old portico
23 Raw rock
24 Sane
28 Tiny particle
31 Ostrich's cousin
32 Paris' river
34 Afternoon social
35 "Yeah, right!"
37 D.C. hundred
39 Pouch
41 "Schnozz"
42 Geronimo or Cochise
45 "See ya"
49 Guard
51 Spoken
52 Not pizzicato
53 Rage
54 Drop
55 Harbor structure
56 Old man
57 Lawyers' charges

DOWN
1 Creche trio
2 Persia, now
3 Joker, for one
4 Carve in relief
5 Strips
6 Rd.
7 Harmonization, for short
8 — borealis
9 Heel type
10 Canape topper
11 Roe source
17 Tic-tac-toe win
19 Elevator name
22 Extraterrestrial
24 Red or Black
25 Type measures
26 Pest
27 Elevated to dignity
29 "— the ramparts ..."
30 More, to Manuela
33 Simple
36 Component
38 Start a golf game
40 Greek consonant
42 Now, on a memo
43 Gilpin of "Frasier"
44 Oklahoma city
46 Scottish hillside
47 Elis' school
48 Right angles
50 Historic time

Solution time: 26 mins.

A	W	L	■	O	G	E	E	■	A	L	B	A
C	H	A	■	H	U	F	L	■	D	E	U	S
H	O	S	P	I	T	A	L	■	O	A	T	H
Y	A	H	O	O	S	■	I	M	P	■	■	■
■	■	■	S	A	Y	■	P	A	I	H	O	S
S	A	T	I	N	■	P	S	I	■	U	M	P
P	S	A	T	■	C	O	E	■	C	L	E	A
A	I	L	■	K	I	X	■	P	L	A	N	T
N	A	C	H	O	S	■	B	R	A	■	■	■
■	■	■	I	N	C	■	A	F	H	A	T	H
C	O	H	K	■	H	O	S	I	E	L	R	Y
O	B	O	E	■	E	D	I	T	■	M	O	E
P	I	E	R	■	R	E	L	Y	■	A	D	S

Friday's answer 12-8

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	■	8	9	10	11
12				■	13			■	14			
15				■	16			17				
18				19		■	20					
■	■	■	21			22	■	23			■	■
24	25	26					27	■	28		29	30
31			■	32				33	■	34		
35			36	■	37				38			
■	■	39		40	■	41				■	■	■
42	43				44	■	45			46	47	48
49						50		■	51			
52				■	53				54			
55				■	56				57			

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Nicki Minaj, 32; Ian Somerhalder, 36; Dominic Monaghan, 38; Teri Hatcher, 50.

Happy Birthday: Follow the trends and observe how others respond around you this year, and you will figure out how to maneuver your way through the ups and downs that come your way. Gains can be made if you make a move or adjust your current living situation. Embrace knowledge and new possibilities, and you will discover talents you never realized you possessed. Your numbers are 2, 17, 21, 26, 38, 45, 47.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): It's full speed ahead. Refuse to let an emotional matter blow up, causing you to miss out on an opportunity. Experience is the engine for success and will enable you to expand your interests and goals. Love is highlighted. ✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Rely on those you trust and respect. Don't get angry about the suggestions made. Listen carefully and you will find a way to use the information you receive in a positive manner. A self-improvement project will bring good results. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Ask for help and fight back if someone is unfair. Don't let an emotional or personal matter stop you from pursuing a position or occupation you desire. A partnership can change the way you live. Love is in the stars. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Emotional matters will flare up if you have been inconsistent. Don't let uncertainty about your future stand between you and an opportunity to enhance your professional relationships. Try to understand the background or history of your peers. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Socialize and you will attract enthusiastic people interested in helping you bring about the changes you feel strongly about making. A money deal or contract will face some glitches due to a lack of conformity. Do your best to present conservative alternatives. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Your efforts to help a cause will not be in vain, but could be met with opposition. Expect someone you live near to offer false information or misinterpret you. Changes at home may be worrisome, but in time will prove to be beneficial. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Take the initiative and make things happen. You can make a difference if you follow through with your beliefs and make your voice heard. Romance will bring positive results in your love life. Make positive changes at home. ✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Get to work and show everyone what you can do. It's up to you to manipulate your vocational situation to help you market your talent and protect your position. Use your experience, quick response and insight to get ahead. ✪✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Withhold secret information that someone may be able to use against you. Use your knowledge, experience and versatility to improve your personal life. Greater emphasis on important relationships will pay off, ensuring positive alterations at home. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Let situations unfold naturally. It is best not to interfere or get in the middle of someone else's agenda. Concentrate on personal concerns and how you best see yourself moving forward. Take care of your own concerns, not someone else's. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Explore new avenues, meet interesting people and share your views. Be a participant and your help and encouragement will be rewarded. An important relationship can be taken to the next level. Options for professional advancement are apparent. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Rely on the people you know you can trust. Do not share personal information that has the potential to damage your reputation or prospects. Connect with someone from your past. Youngsters can offer an innocent point of view. ✪✪✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are complex and unpredictable. You are quick-witted and adventuresome.

*Eugenia's website—**eugenialast.com**, Eugenia's android app @ **http://bit.ly/exhoro** and join Eugenia on **twitter/facebook/linkedin**.*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	2		1				5	
9	4			2		6		8
		3			7		1	
8			5			7		
	1			4			8	
		7			3			2
	3		4			5		
2		8		5			3	1
	6				1		9	

Difficulty Level ★ 12/08

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Last Friday's SUDOKU Answer

8	6	2	3	7	9	5	1	4
5	3	7	6	1	4	8	9	2
4	1	9	8	2	5	7	3	6
1	7	5	9	3	6	2	4	8
3	8	6	7	4	2	1	5	9
2	9	4	5	8	1	6	7	3
7	2	1	4	9	8	3	6	5
9	5	3	2	6	7	4	8	1
6	4	8	1	5	3	9	2	7

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 12/05

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

WHAT DO YOU PUT IN YOUR SAUCES? Solution: 11 letters

M	O	O	R	H	S	U	M	H	P	F	U	D	G	E
E	D	R	E	V	N	C	O	U	L	G	R	N	R	T
D	A	E	R	B	H	A	H	A	A	A	I	D	A	A
L	C	M	A	E	R	C	P	R	T	S	N	O	V	L
O	O	I	D	L	T	P	E	S	S	A	I	T	Y	O
C	V	D	M	E	L	T	U	E	I	I	L	I	H	C
A	A	E	K	E	S	C	R	R	F	S	O	R	M	O
R	A	S	L	Y	D	D	B	M	I	A	I	F	A	H
A	Y	I	O	M	R	U	I	I	S	V	A	O	R	C
N	E	A	B	T	A	N	N	S	Ⓗ	O	I	S	I	N
O	K	N	S	E	T	N	D	O	Ⓞ	R	A	K	E	H
B	S	R	T	E	S	W	G	I	Ⓣ	Y	S	A	R	C
R	I	A	E	W	U	I	C	O	O	K	E	E	O	A
A	H	E	R	S	M	N	O	T	A	M	O	T	S	E
C	W	B	A	R	B	E	C	U	E	O	T	S	E	P

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Last Friday's Answer: Enhancer

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Interested qualified applicants can submit their resume and latest police clearance via e-mail to saipan@aicconstruction.com or mail to AIC Marianas, Inc., PMB 564 PPP Box 10000, Saipan, MP 96950. Closing date: December 11, 2014.

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

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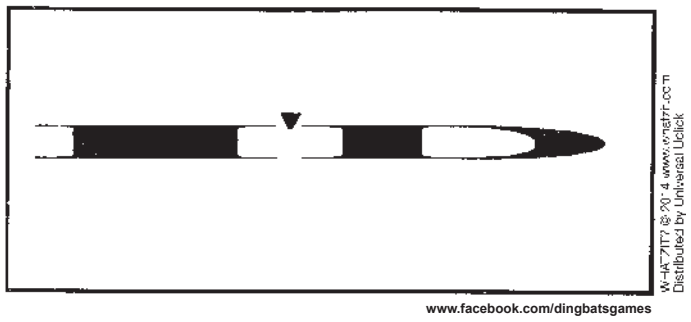

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Yanks strike deal with Miller, acquire Gregorius

NEW YORK (AP) — The Yankees made their first big moves to reshape for 2015, acquiring a shortstop to replace Derek Jeter and a relief pitcher who could take over from David Robertson as closer.

As part of a three-team trade, the Yankees obtained shortstop Didi Gregorius from Arizona and dealt right-hander Shane Greene to Detroit. A few hours later, they agreed to a $36 million, four-year contract with reliever Andrew Miller.

New York is uncertain whether it will re-sign Robertson, who had 39 saves in his first season after replacing retired great Mariano Rivera as closer. A free agent, Robertson is expected to command a four-year deal at a much bigger price than Miller.

"I can't predict yet as his free agency continues where he's going to land," Yankees general manager Brian Cashman said. "I certainly would not allude to the level of our participation. We've been in touch with his agency, and I'll just leave it at that."

Andrew Miller and the New York Yankees agreed to a $36 million, four-year contract. AP

A 29-year-old left-hander who is an imposing 6-foot-7, Miller held opponents to a .153 batting average this year while going 5-5 with a 2.02 ERA for Boston and Baltimore. He averaged 14.87 strikeouts per nine innings, second in the major leagues behind Cincinnati's Aroldis Chapman (17.67) among pitchers who faced at least 50 batters.

Cashman said Miller turned down a $40 million, four-year offer from a team he didn't specify. He called Miller "a high-end weapon to go along with what we already had and what we're collecting" and said the Yankees didn't commit to using him as closer.

"It's protecting us. It gives us some diversification there," Cashman said. "I am not opposed to obviously continuing to pursue someone that has obviously the known closing abilities versus the maybe-can-do-that."

After allowing a .282 opponents' batting average from 2006-12, Miller simplified his mechanics and limited his pitches to mainly fastballs and sliders by pretty much dropping his sinker and changeup. He held hitters to a .175 average the last two years.

"He's now found a niche where he has excelled extremely well. Clearly we took notice as well as the rest of the game," Cashman said.

Miller lives in Tampa, Florida, where the Yankees hold spring training. He will make $9 million annually and joins a bullpen that includes hard-throwing right-hander Dellin Betances, who finished third in AL Rookie of the Year voting. New York's relievers also include Shawn Kelley and Adam Warren - unless they get shifted to the rotation.

Gregorius, a 24-year-old left-handed hitter who was born in Amsterdam and raised in Curacao, becomes the favorite to take over at shortstop following Jeter's retirement. Gregorius hit his first big league homer at Yankee Stadium in April 2013 in his first at-bat with the Diamondbacks but lost the starting shortstop job to Chris Owings during spring training this year and was sent to the minors.

He was recalled when Cliff Pennington tore a thumb ligament and became the regular shortstop when Owings injured a shoulder. Gregorius batted .226 with six homers and 27 RBIs in 80 games this year but hit .137 (7 for 51) against left-handers.

"At the very least we expect him to be utilized in probably a platoon with Brendan Ryan until he separates himself," Cashman said. "So high-end projections. We think there is more in the tank there as he continues to develop."

Cashman maintained Gregorius shouldn't worry about taking over from one of the Yankees' greatest players, saying "no one will replace Derek Jeter" and calling the ex-captain "one in a billion."

The 26-year-old Greene was 5-4 with a 3.78 ERA in 14 starts and one relief appearance during his first big league season. New York, Detroit and Arizona also made a three-team trade in December 2009 that involved Max Scherzer, Curtis Granderson, Austin Jackson and others.

"I was not shopping him," Cashman said. "I had no interest in trading him, but in the end, it took him to get a vitally important position taken care of on the field."

Meanwhile, in Tampa Bay, the Rays aren't wary of Kevin Cash's age and inexperience.

The team tabbed the former Cleveland Indians bullpen coach as Joe Maddon's replacement on Friday, selecting him over ex-Seattle Mariners manager and current Kansas City Royals bench coach Don Wakamatsu.

The Tampa native who turns 37 on Saturday has no previous managerial experience, yet the Rays are confident he has what it takes to be successful.

"It came down to the energy, the poise that he has, the confidence, but the open-mindedness that goes along with it. That's a rare combination to have in an individual," president of baseball operations Matt Silverman said.

Cash wowed the team during a final interview that lasted half-a-day. He becomes the youngest active manager in the majors, taking over a team that made the playoffs four of the past seven seasons under Maddon.

"After 12 hours we were pretty drained and it felt like Kevin was just getting started," Silverman said.

Sick Tiger finally gets back to par with 69

WINDERMERE, Fla. (AP—Tiger Woods had his best score of the week and never felt worse Saturday in the Hero World Challenge.

Woods lost his voice overnight. He was nauseous on the practice range and when he took a swig of water on the first hole, he threw it up. He had a fever that finally broke on the front nine at Isleworth. And he closed with three straight birdies for a 3-under 69.

"It wasn't easy and I fought hard," Woods said. "That's about all I had."

It was enough to at least get back to even par for the tournament, though he remained in last place and was the only player not under par.

Woods hasn't competed since Aug. 9 when he missed the cut at the PGA Championship, taking off nearly four months to build up strength so that his injured back would be fully healed. This is the only tournament he will play for about two months. The tournament benefits his foundation and learning centers, and it has a new sponsor.

What a time to get sick.

"That's the way it goes," Woods said.

He said he wouldn't have withdrawn even if this were not his tournament. And it's not like illness has never held him back. It was 11 years ago, and just down the road at Bay Hill, when Woods battled a nasty bout of food poisoning during the final round. He won by 11.

"I like to compete," he said. "If I can go, I can go. I'll give it everything I have. I wasn't in pain. Just a little bit under the weather."

Woods said he threw up before and during the round, and he probably wanted to vomit after a couple of more duffed chips, which have received plenty of attention this week. Woods stubbed two more chips on Saturday, bringing the total to eight chips that could only be described as shockingly bad.

Both led to bogey, and Woods appeared to be on his way to another mediocre score until the end. After the fever broke and he said his strength slowly started to return, Woods was pin-high on the par-4 16th with a 3-wood (the tees were moved forward) and made an 8-foot birdie. He hit the middle of the green on the par-5 17th with a fairway metal that never left its target and had a two-putt birdie. And with an 8-iron from 170, he stuffed it on No. 18 for a third straight birdie.

The best part of the day? Playing with Billy Horschel, they finished in just over three hours.

"We played fast, which was nice," Woods said. "I didn't have to sit out in that heat for too long."

Women's World Cup: US draws 'group of death'

GATINEAU, Que. – The football gods listened to Canadian coach John Herdman Friday night.

He asked for Canada not to be in a "group of death". And he asked for New Zealand, the team he coached in the Women's World Cup in 2007 and 2011, to be in Canada's pool.

And that's exactly what Herdman got. The only wish he wasn't granted was for New Zealand to be the opening-match opponent on June 6 in Edmonton, when the 2015 Women's World Cup gets under way.

Canada drew New Zealand, along with China and the Netherlands, in the group stage. They will open against China in Edmonton on June 6.

"We avoided that group of death. Bless Sweden and USA and Nigeria, I mean, wow, that's a tough group. We're going home pretty happy today," Herdman said. "It's not the hardest group. it's not the easiest, but certainly doable. Over the last three years we've played all of those teams and beaten them. It's a good group for us, one that we think we can finish on top of."

The Americans drew the closest thing to what could be called a "group of death" in this World Cup. They drew Australia, Sweden and Nigeria in Group D. And as a host city, they drew Winnipeg.

"I think out of the all the groups, physically it's going to be very challenging. But I think that's good, because we're deep. We've got a lot of young players, and we've got a lot of depth on our roster," U.S. coach Jill Ellis said. "It's earned respect, it's earned pressure. I think, because of historically how this team has done, I think we're coming in with something to prove, and we're gunning for it. We haven't won a World Cup in many years."

"All three teams in with the United States will push the Americans to their limits," said Jason De Vos, the former Canadian national player, now a commentator on TSN.

Here's the groupings: Group A (Edmonton) has Canada, China, New Zealand, and Netherlands; Group B (Ottawa): Germany, Côte D'Ivoire, Norway, and Thailand; Group C (Vancouver): Japan, Switzerland, Cameroon, and Ecuador; Group D (Winnipeg): U.S.A., Australia, Sweden, and Nigeria; Group W (Montreal): Brazil, South Korea, Spain, and Costa Rica; and Group F (Moncton): France, England, Colombia, and Mexico.

The ceremony itself was an elaborate production. Held in the IMAX theatre at the Canadian Museum of History, just over the bridge from Ottawa in Gatineau, there was entertainment, a video presentation, the singing of the national anthem by former Canadian winner Eva Avila, and even a full complement of tourism stations from each of the six cities that will host games next summer.

Warriors beat Bulls for 12th straight win

CHICAGO (AP)—Steve Kerr called himself the luckiest coach in the NBA.

In his first coaching job, his Golden State Warriors have set a franchise record with their 12th straight victory and improved to a league-best 10-1 on the road.

"They're easy to coach. They're really talented. They're unselfish," Kerr said. "I'm just lucky."

Draymond Green scored a career-high 31 points and the Warriors beat the Chicago Bulls 112-102 on Saturday night. Klay Thompson added 24 points for the Warriors, who extended their league-best record to 17-2.

Jimmy Butler led the Bulls (12-8) with 24 points. Pau Gasol added 22 points and 20 rebounds.

The Warriors previously won a franchise-record 11 straight games from Dec. 29, 1971-Jan. 22, 1972.

"You're talking about a franchise that was historically known for losing," Green said. "A new ownership group came in, and it completely changes the entire organization. It's a great feeling. We feel like we have a lot left in the tank."

The Bulls fell to just 2-5 at home.

Golden State Warriors guard Stephen Curry (30) controls the ball against Chicago Bulls forward Taj Gibson (22) during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Chicago on Saturday, Dec. 6, 2014. The Warriors won, 112-102.

The Warriors had lost five straight and 11 of 12 and were 6-28 over 35 years in Chicago.

"It's been miserable," said Stephen Curry, who earned his first victory at the United Center. "We've not only lost, but we've gotten beaten pretty bad here."

Thompson and Green hit back-to-back 3-pointers to give the Warriors a 95-87 lead with 6:25 remaining. Green made another 3 and hit a jumper to extend the lead to 103-90 with 3:11 left.

Gasol tipped in a basket to cut the lead to 107-100 with 31.5 seconds left, but Curry went 5 of 6 at the free throw line in the final seconds.

Green shot 7 for 13 from 3-point range.

"We made a conscious effort of getting Curry out of the game, but we left Green open a lot of the time," Gasol said. "He got going and he shot 13 3s - which is a lot of 3s - and most of them were uncontested."

Green's previous career high was 24 points against the Los Angeles Clippers on Nov. 5. He entered Saturday averaging 12.5 points.

"He's given us a new dimension with his 3-point shooting," Kerr said.

Curry had 19 points to give him double-figure scoring in 18 of 19 games. Harrison Barnes and Marreese Speights added 11 points apiece for the Warriors, who shot 12 of 30 from 3-point range and had 28 fast-break points to the Bulls' 13.

Joakim Noah scored 16 points and Taj Gibson, back after missing six games with an ankle injury, added 12 for the Bulls, who committed 22 turnovers. Gasol recorded his sixth straight double-double.

"They're defending better," Gasol said about the Warriors. "They understand that it's a key piece of being a great team."

Meanwhile, during warmups, Bulls guard Derrick Rose wore a black "I Can't Breathe" T-shirt, referring to a New York man who died July 17 after a police officer placed him in a chokehold when he was being arrested for selling loose, untaxed cigarettes. A videotape recording of the arrest showed Eric Garner gasping, "I can't breathe" during the fatal encounter. Thousands around the country have protested the grand jury decision to not indict the officer.

Rose did not speak to reporters after the game. He finished with nine points, six assists and four rebounds.

"I respect Derrick a lot," Noah said. "He definitely is making a statement by wearing it. That's my guy."

Kerr, who won three NBA titles as a Bulls player, enjoyed his return to Chicago. He chatted with former teammate Scottie Pippen.

"Really fun to come in and get a win," Kerr said.

Clippers 120, Pelicans 100

In Los Angeles, Blake Griffin scored 30 points, going over 7,000 for his career, and the Los Angeles Clippers rallied after blowing an 18-point, first-half lead to beat the New Orleans Pelicans 120-100 on Saturday night for their seventh straight victory.

J.J. Redick scored 13 of his 21 points in the first quarter, Jamal Crawford added 20, Chris Paul had 18 points and 16 assists, and DeAndre Jordan had 18 rebounds for Los Angeles. Griffin was one of just two starters to go to the free throw line, where he made 10 of 15.

Anthony Davis scored 26 points, Ryan Anderson added 16 off the bench and Luke Babbitt had 12 after making four of five 3-pointers for New Orleans, which has dropped two straight and five of six.

The Clippers led by 18 early in the second quarter only to watch the Pelicans tie it at 54-all at halftime. New Orleans shot 74 percent and made 5 of 6 3-pointers in the quarter, when Anderson led the way with 12 points. Babbitt hit a 3-pointer for the tie with 28 seconds left.

Griffin's layup late in the second gave him 7,001 points, making the four-year veteran the second-quickest in franchise history behind Bob McAdoo to reach that mark.

The Pelicans took their only lead of the game, 56-54, to start the third on a hook by Omer Asik. From there, the Clippers gradually pulled away to another double-digit lead on a 3-pointer by Paul. They stretched it to 93-78 at the end of the third on Paul's running layup.

Redick capped his red-hot opening quarter with a buzzer-beating 3-pointer, giving the Clippers a 34-18 lead after they shot 65 percent.

The Pelicans got back in it in the second with their five 3-pointers. Anderson had two 3s, Austin Rivers added one and Babbitt hit the tying 3 just before halftime.

Sixers 108, Pistons 101, OT

In Auburn Hills, Hollis Thompson's 3-pointer in the final seconds sent the game to overtime, and Philadelphia outlasted Detroit in a matchup of the teams with the NBA's two worst records.

Detroit (3-17) dropped its 11th straight and now leads the 76ers (2-18) by only a game in the standings. Philadelphia has won two of three since starting the season 0-17.

Thompson tied it at 100 when he sank a fadeaway shot from the right corner with 13.4 seconds left in regulation. The Pistons managed only one point in overtime.

The teams entered with a combined record of 4-34, the second-worst in NBA history for teams about to play each other—with a minimum of 38 combined games. The 76ers and Buffalo Braves were 4-35 entering their meeting Nov. 24, 1972, according to STATS.

Robert Covington scored 25 points for Philadelphia. Josh Smith led Detroit with 23 points, and he also had eight rebounds and seven assists.

Magic 105, Kings 96

In Sacramento, Tobias Harris scored a season-high 27 points for Orlando, and Channing Frye made a game-changing 3-pointer late in the fourth quarter.

Victor Oladipo had 16 points, seven assists and five rebounds, helping the Magic to their second straight win following back-to-back losses to Golden State and the Los Angeles Clippers.

The Magic (9-14) led most of the game and were up by 16 early in the fourth quarter before holding off a late Sacramento push to end a four-game losing streak to the Kings.

Darren Collison scored 22 points for Sacramento, and Jason Thompson had 18. The Kings have dropped five of six.

Rockets 100, Suns 95

In Houston, Trevor Ariza and Pat Beverley each scored 19 points, leading Houston to its fourth straight win.

The Rockets improved to 16-4 by winning for the seventh time in the nine games All-Star center Dwight Howard (knee strain) has been out.

The Rockets led by as many as 22 points. The Suns used an 8-2 run, capped by a tip-in by PJ Tucker, to cut the lead to 97-93 with 21.9 seconds remaining.

But Beverley made three free throws to make it 100-93 and Houston held on for the win.

Eric Bledsoe led the Suns with 23 points.

Spurs 123, Timberwolves 101

In San Antonio, Marco Belinelli scored 20 points, Tim Duncan had 13 points and 10 rebounds, and San Antonio rolled to the easy win.

The Spurs had seven players score in double figures. Kawhi Leonard and Cory Joseph had 18 points apiece, and Boris Diaw finished with 17.

San Antonio (15-5) had a season-high 30 assists.

Zach LaVine had 22 points and Shabazz Muhammad added 20 for Minnesota (4-15), which has lost five straight.

Packers Shields yet to be cleared

GREEN BAY, Wis. (AP)—Sam Shields' availability for the Green Bay's game Monday night against the Atlanta Falcons is in question with the Packers cornerback yet to be cleared from a concussion.

Packers' Sam Shields leaves game with concussion The Associated Press

Coach Mike McCarthy said that he would give Shields ''every opportunity'' to play against the Falcons. Shields was listed as questionable Saturday on the Packers' final injury report before the game.

The five-year veteran got hurt while making a tackle during the second quarter of last week's win over New England.

''You're either in the (concussion) protocol or you're not in the protocol,'' McCarthy said. ''Once the player comes out of that and he's cleared, then it becomes the decision of the coaching staff or in conversation with the player to see if he's ready to go.''

Certainly, the Packers would like to have Shields available against an Atlanta offense that gained 500 yards against Arizona last week.

The Falcons' receiving group, featuring Julio Jones, might be bolstered if veteran Roddy White can return from an ankle injury. White, who has 37 catches in his past five games, was listed as questionable after returning to practice as a limited participant Saturday.

However, cornerback might be the Packers' deepest group, with Shields partnering with Tramon Williams as starters. Davon House and Casey Hayward are capable backups.

Cornerbacks coach Joe Whitt said he makes sure to give all his top players ample snaps on the practice field, so it's not as if the Packers are rushing to get the reserves ready.

''Those four guys get equal reps so the preparation hasn't been any different,'' Whitt said. ''All four guys have been on every top receiver and played well. I like what we have.''

Defensive tackle Mike Daniels (back), guards T.J. Lang (ankle) and Josh Sitton (toe) and outside linebacker Nick Perry (shoulder) are probable. Daniels, who is third on the team with four sacks, ''is going to be full strength'' for Monday, McCarthy said.

SJ Ol'Aces, KFC barge into semifinals

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The San Jose Ol'Aces and Kentucky Fried Chicken eased their way to the semifinals of the U21 division of the 2014 BANMI Youth League after ousting separate foes last week at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

KFC bagged the first semis berth after downing Dough Boys last Thursday, 64-52, while the SJ Ol'Aces joined the former in the Final Four, following a 70-32 demolition of the Rollers B last Friday.

KFC cruised to the double-digit win after scoring its most points in the fourth quarter. The first semifinalist drained 21 points in the final period turning a 43-38 edge at the end of the third to the 12-point winning margin.

A balanced scoring in the fourth frame powered KFC past Dough Boys, as four of its players hit at least two baskets apiece. Big man Jun Javier fired 6 points, while Jethro Cruz added 5, and Art Borromeo and Dixon Kwon chipped in 4 each. Shane Deleon Guerrero tallied KFC's 2 other points in the fourth period to finish with a game-high 16 markers. Javier also had 16 points.

With Javier and Deleon Guerrero alternately drilling baskets for KFC, the team managed to keep its distance with the hard fighting Dough Boys in the first two quarters, 19-15, 30-28. Dough Boys behind the successive baskets of Mii Tekopua remained in contention after the third frame, facing only a 5-point deficit. However, Dough Boys faded out in the fourth as Tekopua was held to 2 points and only Ronnie Sto. Domingo stepped up, while KFC drew contributions from multiple players.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
The San Jose Ol'Aces' Ignacio Borja is fouled from behind by the Rollers B's Angelo Factor during the fourth quarter of their U18 playoff game in the BANMI youth caging last Friday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

In last Friday's second playoff match, the top-ranked SJ Ol'Aces had the game in the bag right at the end of the first period after taking a 24-8 advantage against the cellar dweller and winless Rollers.

Ignacio Borja led the SJ Ol'Aces strong start, scoring 12 of his game-high 26 points in the opening period. Kobee Mendoza, Gareth Jumaoas, and Karlo De Leon then backed up Borja in the last three quarters, as the trio combined for 29 points and nearly matched the output of the entire Rollers B crew.

Meanwhile, the last two semis berths in the U18 division will be at stake today.

The Chalan Kanoa Saints and Ol'Aces will contest the third semis seat at 10am with the winner facing KFC in the semifinals, while the G-Rollers and DYS collide for the fourth and last semis spot at 11:30am with the victor meeting the SJ Ol'Aces. The semis matches are set for tomorrow.

THURSDAY

KFC 64–Deleon Guerrero 16, Javier 16, Kwon 13, Cruz 12, Borromeo 4, Darag 2, Feria 1.

Dough Boys 52–Tekopua 21, Sta. Domingo 10, Guerrero 8, Iba 4, Espinosa 4, Esmundo 4, Camacho 2.

Scoring by quarters: 19-15, 30-28, 43-38, 64-52.

FRIDAY

SJ Ol'Aces 70–Borja 26, Jumao-as 11, Mendoza 10, De Leon 8, Pangelinan 4, Epity 4, Cruz 3.

Rollers B 32–Ogumoro 12, Fejeran 7, Yu 6, Bucayo 4, Arceo 4, Pangilinan 3.

Scoring by quarters: 24-8, 46-14, 57-17, 70-32.

Benchwarmers, Local Motion still unbeaten

The Benchwarmers and Local Motion kept their clean record in the Rocball league after four rounds and more than 20 games at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

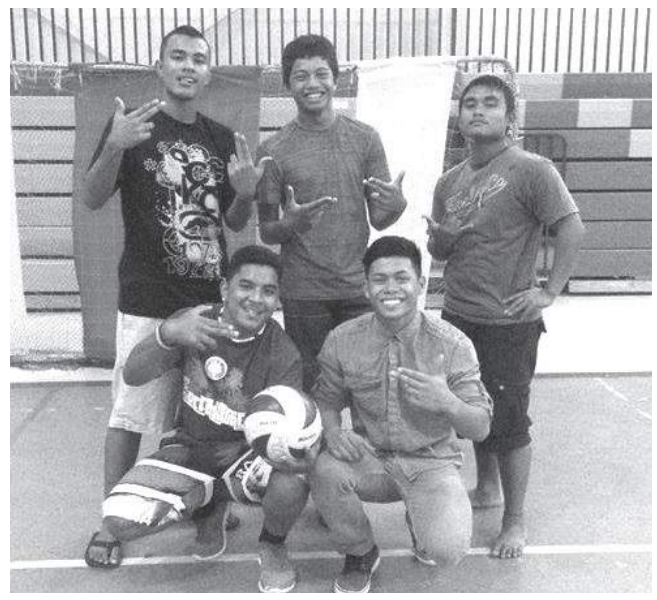
The Benchwarmers and Local Motion hold similar 4-0 records to share the lead in the nine-team field. Other teams competing in the league are Got Very Determined, Veterans, Teachers, Oba Squirt, Mix, Bring It On, and Team Nameless.

The two leading squads will collide this Wednesday for the solo top spot.

Heading into this week's battle of undefeated teams, the Benchwarmers are ahead of Local Motion in aces scoring, 34-33. In the 2-point xunks, the Benchwarmers dominated Local Motion, 11-4. Local Motion had the Benchwarmers' numbers in backcourt scoring, 18-14, and the former also prevailed in goals scoring, 6-1.

Rocball games are played in four sets. A team can win a game after four sets if it had the lead in points (total) and also won the fourth set. If the leading team lost the fourth set, the game goes in overtime with the trailing squad needing to win twice and the former only once.

For more information about Rocball and its league, please contact James W. Feger at (670) 235-3812. ***(Saipan Tribune)***



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Benchwarmers players pose for a photo after their game in the Rocball league last week at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

FAST

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Kaon Cho rounding up the Top 3 male finishers.

Australian John Anderson holds the event's record (2:44:52) when the original route began and finished at PIC two years ago. His 2012 time shattered his 2011 record of 2:57:47.

"I liked the route this year because of the steep hills after the first five kilometers. This is the kind of route that I love," said Fast through an interpreter. "I enjoyed the Suicide Cliff route. Riding up was also the most difficult time since the muscles are not warmed up yet."

Nakamura held the early lead going to the four corners—Banzai Cliff, Bird Island, Grotto, and Suicide Cliff—with Fast and Dorovskikh not far behind. The three helped each other by alternately holding the lead.

Fast then made his move and broke away from that three-person lead group after the ride out of Kingfisher. Not even the road construction work along Isa Drive could slow him down.

"I've competed in a lot of races and definitely there are places like that (construction or renovation) based on my experience so I had no problem at all," said Fast, who is a member of Singha Thailand's international pro cycling team.

Guam's Peter Lombard finished fourth (3:11:19), while Korean Cho, who also joined this year's XTERRA and Tagaman triathlon races, dropped to fourth with a time of 3:12:35. Park City, Utah native Chris Peters came in at sixth (3:43:17).

The Top 3 male and female winners received medals and cash prizes—$1,250, $750, and $500.

While Fast got his first Hell of the Marianas men's championship, Carey reclaimed the women's crown she last won in 2010 and in the process clinch her fourth title overall.

Carey, who relocated to Guam two years ago, was the fastest female rider to go around the island, clocking in 3:30:36. Her time was slower compared to the 3:17:00 she recorded in the same race a couple of years ago.

Australian Jodie Willet, who failed to join this year and defend her title, holds the best time in the women's division, recording 3:03:44 last year when she defeated Carey (3:15:09).

Saipan's Kimiko McKagan, a regular fixture in various racing events on Saipan, came in at second place with a time of 4:11:44 while Guam's Lynn Matix finished third after crossing the finish line in 4:36:56.

NMI

From Page 28

their final event last Saturday. Both male swimmers joined the 100m freestyle qualifying races and were on the same heat (2).

Sugie broke the one-minute barrier, completing the 100m freestyle race in 59.38 and placing fourth in the heat behind Seychelle's Adam Moncherry (58.22 seconds), Tonga's Tongli Panuve (58.46), and Nepal's Mirah Prajapati (58.64). Sugie also crushed his qualifying time (1:00.67).

Villacrusis duplicated Sugie's feat as the former registered 1:00.88, about five seconds faster than his qualifying time of 1:05.29. The 14-year-old Villacrusis finished ahead of Laos' Pathana Inthavong (1:01.66), Burundi's Idriss Mutakabandi (1:03.60), and Guyana's Andrew Fowler (1:04.48).

Villacrusis earlier surpassed his qualifying time in the 100m breaststroke event (1:22.35), recording 1:18.93 last Wednesday, while Sugie also had a faster mark in his first swim (50m freestyle) in the five-day competition.

Sugie completed the sprint race in 26.94 seconds last Thursday and was ranked third on Heat 2 behind Panuve (26.52 seconds) and Prajapati (26.86). The Commonwealth bet defeated five other swimmers in his heat.

Meanwhile, 17 world records have been set after four days of competition in Doha. A few more world marks were expected to fall, as the event held the finals of five individual races last night.

In the medal tally, Hungary had the lead after last Saturday's races with its six golds, two silvers, and one bronze. Spain is in second place with its 4-0-0 tally, followed by the Netherlands (3-1-5), Brazil (3-1-2), and France (3-1-2). The favored U.S. is out of the Top 5, as it is currently ranked seventh, but has the most medals with its 2-6-5 tally.

NMSA

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shooter, has held her own against the league's top male players, averaging 11 points, 2 assists, 2 steals, and 2 rebounds per game.

In the race for the Tan Siu Lin Foundation/NMASA Student Athletes of the Month, Eda emerged as the winner in the boys division after a dominant performance in two running events last month.

The Saipan Southern High School senior showed that despite having less than two years of running experience, he can rule his division in two Northern Marianas Athletics-organized races. Eda was the top high school long distance runner this season as he ruled the 2.7-mile All Schools Cross Country finals, timing in at 25:31 last month at the American Memorial Park. He also won two of the three legs of the annual race.

Less than two weeks later, Eda won the U17 division of the 2014 Annual Turkey Trot with a time of 42:18, which is good for third overall and was just a few seconds behind his coach/trainer Ketson Kabiriel. Eda also finished 75th out of the 220 long distance runners in the Oceania Area Cross Country Championships held in Guam in October, holding his ground in a strong field that includes runners from powerhouse Australia and New Zealand.

Race shared the top student honors with Eda as she helped Marianas High School win its-fifth straight girls basketball crown in the Marianas Interscholastic Sports Organization. She is a multi-sport athlete as she also excelled in athletics, soccer, and swimming.

Race was not among the top scorers for the Lady Dolphins, but helped her team on defense and hustled for the rebounds. Her inside presence can force their opponents to change their shots.

MHS basketball mentor Preston Basa said that Race is the type player every coach wants to have on his team.

"Her discipline and never give up attitude are huge contributors to her accomplishments. I never have to worry about Gabby's work ethic."

Race won in the female student athlete of the month contest against Savellano. Basketball's Bart Demapan (male athlete) and Kobee Mendoza (male student athlete) and badminton's Rowena Sison (female athlete) and Yu (male student athlete) were the other November nominees.

8th Annual Hell of Marianas

PHOTOS BY JON PEREZ

Manny Sitchon, 95 is among the close to 170 riders who joined last Saturday's 8th Annual Hell of the Marianas century cycling race.

Three road bike competitors head toward the final stages of the 100-kilometer bike race.

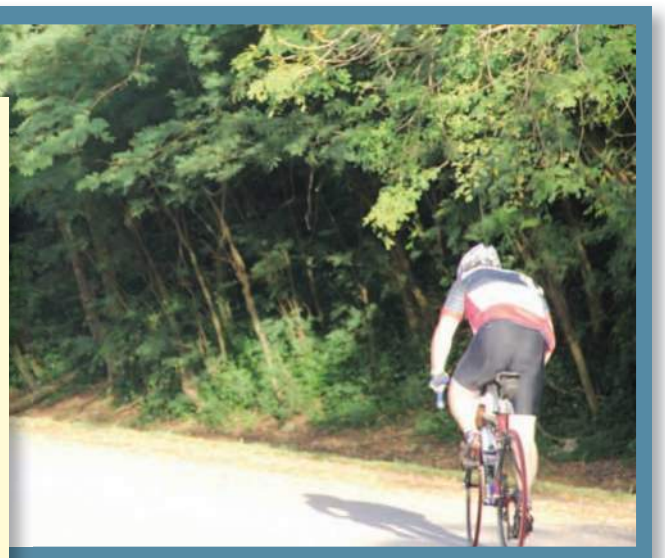
A group of riders make its way to a steep curve going to Bird Island.

Susan Marchitti tries to pedal her way out of Grotto.

A group of cyclists remains in high spirits despite biking under the scorching heat.

A volunteer prepares to give a water bottle to Guam's Peter Lombard near Kingfisher.

Romy Lanuza and his crew help a rider who crashed near San Vicente.



Steve Nutting makes his way along 'elbow' road in Marpi.

Romy Lanuza and one of his bike mechanics assist Tyce Mister after the latter had a flat tire.

Male and female cyclists conquer one of the climbs featured in the annual cycling event.

Yanks strike deal with Miller, acquire Gregorius

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Sports

Warriors beat Bulls for 12th straight win

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Fast, Mieko fastest out of 'Hell'

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Konstantine Fast and Mieko Carey survived the slippery and treacherous 100-kilometer ride around Saipan to rule the 8th Annual Hell of the Marianas century cycle race held last Saturday.

An early morning downpour did not dampen the spirit of more than 170 riders, who braved the 6am start time, with Fast and Carey recording the fastest times in the the men's and women's pro/open category.

Fast, who has been competing in the century race every year since 2011, pedaled his way at an average of 21.96 miles per hour to finish the race with a time of 2:49:22. He was 1:19 ahead of compatriot Alexander Dorovskikh (2:51:41), while Japan's Ryutaro Nakamura completed the Top 3 with his 2:56:13.

The 38-year-old cyclist from Khabarovsk in the Russian Far East shattered Japan's Kasuhiro Yamamoto's 2:56:38 time last year when organizers decided to change the starting and finish line from Pacific Islands Club in San Antonio to Marianas Resort & Spa in Marpi. Dorovskikh finished second behind Yamamoto last year with Korean

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JON PEREZ
From left, Russia's Konstantine Fast and Alexander Dorovskikh and Japan's Ryutaro Nakamura slow down as they head toward Bird Island during last Saturday's 8th Annual Hell of the Marianas.

Strong finish for NMI swimmers

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Three CNMI swimmers capped their campaign in the 12th FINA World Swimming Championships (25M) by beating their qualifying times.

Victoria Chentsova raced in the 400m freestyle swim for her last event at the Hamad Aquatic Centre in Doha, Qatar, last Friday and submitted 4:47.05 to eclipse her qualifying time of 4:53.64.

The 16-year-old swimmer was on Heat 1, had a split time of 2:21.31, and finished fourth in her group, placing ahead of Albania's Diana Basho (4:47.52), Antigua and Barbuda's Samantha Roberts (4:59.52), and Sri Lanka's Chamodi De Fonseka (5:01.43).

The new best time in the 400m freestyle was Chentsova's second as she also shattered her qualifying mark in the 800m freestyle. The Saipan International School student clocked in at 9:55.15 in last Thursday's qualifying race, around 17 seconds faster than her qualifying time (10:11.26).

Chentsova's fellow CNMI swimmers—Christian Villacrusis and Takumi Sugie—had

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ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Victoria Chentsova, seen here racing in a local tournament early this year, beat her qualifying time in the 400m freestyle event in the 12th FINA World Swimming Championships (25M) last Friday at the Hamad Aquatic Centre in Doha, Qatar.

4 earn NMSA monthly honors

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

Glenn Buultjens and Teresita Sablan were named Male and Female Athletes of the Month (for November), while Seiya Eda and Gabrielle Race earned the top student athletes honors from Northern Marianas Sports Association.

Buultjens teamed up with youngsters Youngson Yu and Jenine Savellano in ruling the men's and mixed doubles A divisions of last month's Tan Holdings Open 2014 badminton tournament. The former Ombudsman employee and one of the top men's badminton players on the island joined Yu in sweeping their way to the finals of the premier men's A doubles. He and Yu enjoyed a twice-to-beat edge after winning all of their three matches, but dropped the first game as Deether Edralin and Jongmin Lee forced a rubber following a 21-17, 21-19 upset. Buultjens and Yu, however made sure the title won't slip away from their hands and sealed the deal with a 21-13, 21-16 win.

Buultjens then added the mixed doubles A title to his collection, teaming up with Savellano. They also enjoyed a twice-to-beat advantage and finished the finals early with a 21-16, 21-13 win over the brother-sister tandem of Jordan and Janelle Pangilinan.

Sablan, meanwhile, is currently playing for NMSA in the 2014 IT&E-DYS Inter-government Basketball League and is one of the only two female players suiting up for the competition. Connie Camacho is the other one.

Sablan, a known outside

See NMSA on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Marianas High School's Gabrielle Race tries to keep the ball away from Mt. Carmel School's Masami Sato during their title game in the MISO girls caging last month at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.